

PROVERBS

Practical Wisdom from the book of Proverbs



Home Group Leader's Guide

August to October 2022

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OVERVIEW

Proverbs Homegroup Series

SERIES PASSAGE

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight." Proverbs 9:10

Proverbs helps us to understand God's wisdom and why we should apply it today

A. ABOUT THE "PROVERBS" SERIES

Proverbs is a collection of numerous short instructions for living an effective life on earth, to help us do what is right - wise, just and fair. The Book of proverbs was written with the intention for its wisdom to be passed down from generation to generation. It aims to teach people to use their resources, time, power, privilege in a way to benefit both themselves and the world. King Solomon, the book's primary author, knew the greatest gift he could pass to his children were keys to success by living life wisely.

In this series we will learn how to build wisdom and avoid folly, as well as study what Proverbs teaches about a range of practical topics including money, work ethics, attitude, pride v humility, habits, relationships, morality, speech, envy and counsel.

B. BACKGROUND TO THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

The book of Proverbs is part of the wider wisdom literature, including Psalms, Ecclesiastes, James, Job, Song of Songs. While many of these books offer a godly perspective in the midst of challenges and difficulties life offers, Proverbs focuses entirely on instructing people in the path of practical wisdom.

Looking at the titles within Proverbs points to its authors. There can be little doubt the bulk of Proverbs was written by King Solomon (Prov 1:1, 10:1, 25:1). Other parts were written by advisors to king Hezekiah (25:1), or Agur (30:1) and Lemuel, passed down from his mother (31:1). It's worth noting, however, the value of the Proverb is not placed on the author, as

this collection of wise instructions was ultimately included in the Bible by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim 3:16).

Proverbs can be divided into the following divisions:

Proverbs 1:1 to 7 – As the Introduction, the theme of wisdom is stated very early in the book ending a section on the path to wisdom – “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*” - 1:7 (c.f. “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*”, 9:10). Notice it says the fear of God is the **beginning** of wisdom and not the **attainment** of wisdom.

Proverbs 1:8 to 9:18 – These nine chapters are devoted to one theme, namely extolling or exalting Wisdom. It is interesting to note in each of these chapters Solomon is addressing these sayings to “my son” or “my children.” As parents, it is good to read through and understand the first nine chapters so that you can instruct your children in the practical wisdom contained in the various topics covered by these chapters.

Proverbs 10 to 29 – This includes a long run of proverbs covering many areas of our lives and providing wise guiding principles.

Proverbs 30 to 31 – These are the sayings of Agur and the oracle of Lemuel’s mother, ending with the subject of the virtuous woman. Why do you suppose this book devoted thirty and a half chapter in describing and discussing wisdom and then culminates with a verbal portrait of a virtuous woman? Why? The answer is clear. The virtuous woman is the EMBODIMENT of the wisdom of God. We will cover this at the end of this series.

C. OUTLINE OF THE WISDOM SERIES

God calls us to “walk circumspectly [carefully], not as fools but as wise”
Ephesians 5:15 (NKJV)

This series aims to help the home group members to understand the source and importance of living a life full of practical godly wisdom.

Of the five sessions, the first two are used to explore the foundations of wisdom. How is wisdom built and why is it so important? It touches on the way of folly as a warning to us if we reject wisdom.

Sessions 3 and 4 involves study and discussion for various wisdom topics highlighted in the book. This will require some preparation by the participants prior to the Session. The final session, looks at an analogy of wisdom, embodied as a virtuous woman.

The following table outlines the key points of each Session:

SESSION	TITLE	KEY PASSAGE	MAIN POINT
Session 1	Building Wisdom	Proverbs 24:3-4	Practical wisdom for life is like a house built with knowledge, understanding and wisdom
Session 2	The Importance of Wisdom	Proverbs 1:24-27	Wisdom is essential for living. The consequences of folly help us to choose the right path
Session 3	Areas of Wisdom (Part 1)	Ephesians 5:15	Group discussion of various topics
Session 4	Areas of Wisdom (Part 2)	Proverbs 15:21	Group discussion of various topics
Session 5	Wisdom Embodied	Proverbs 31:10-31	A picture of wisdom lived out as a woman

The video sessions for this series are written and presented by Ps Chris Ong.

The suggested format for each session in the Wisdom series is:

SESSION ACTIVITY	TIME
Worship / Opening Prayer	5-15 mins
Welcome and Session Introduction	5 mins
Read Scripture (session passage)	5 mins
Watch session video	5 mins
Highlight the Main Point	5 mins
Wisdom Discussion	30 mins
Closing/personal Prayer	10 mins
TOTAL TIME	70-90 mins

NOTE: Sessions 3 & 4 are small group reading, study and discussion. There is no main point.

D. LEADING THE SESSIONS

Biblical study of Proverbs will give insights into wise ways to live your everyday life. This series is largely self-discovery of proverbs and is relatively easy to facilitate. Note that Sessions 3 and 4 may be better allocated before the session. Some of the topics contain a lot of scripture, so it may be better allocated ahead of time to give people a chance to read and reflect themselves.

We sincerely desire to support all our home group leaders, especially in this potentially tricky series. If you have any questions, concerns or require further assistance about leading the Wisdom sessions, do not hesitate to reach out to our pastoral staff, Ps. Quentin Loke (quentin.loke@fgam.org.au) or Ps. YC Goh (yc.goh@fgam.org.au).

SESSION VIDEOS

The short Session video complements the leader's guide and will assist the members with the direction of the discussion.

E. RESOURCES

The "Wisdom" Leader's Guide and Member's Notes are available for download at <http://fgam.org.au/media/homegroup-materials>.

If you are unable to access the files, would like a USB stick with the downloaded videos please contact Ps. YC Goh on 0425 799 576 or yc.goh@fgam.org.au.

Books for further study on Proverbs include:

- "The Wisdom Books" by Robert Alter
- "Be Skillful (Proverbs)" by Warren W. Wiersbe
- "Living the Proverbs: Insights for the Daily Grind" by Charles R. Swindoll

There is no corresponding Sunday Preaching series.

Keywords: *Wisdom • Knowledge • Understanding • Folly • Consequences*

F.A.I.T.H. emphasis: T - Teachable in Discipleship

SESSION 1

Building Wisdom

Key Verse: “Through **Wisdom** a house is built, and by **Understanding** it is established; by **Knowledge** the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches” Proverbs 24:3-4

A. INTRODUCTION

This Session introduces us to the Wisdom series by looking at what builds Wisdom. The author intends for us to learn how to grow wiser and how to live well.

Wisdom keeps us in harmony with the principles and purposes of the Lord so that as we follow in obedience, everything works for us and not against us. This doesn’t mean we escape trials and difficulties in life, but people with wisdom have the skill to face life honestly and courageously, and to manage it successfully so that God’s purposes are fulfilled in their lives.

In Proverbs, the words “wise” and “wisdom” are used at least 125 times, because the aim of the book is to help us acquire and apply God’s wisdom to the decisions and activities of daily life. Wisdom is like building a house, there are wise ways and foolish ways to build. This session we will ask the question, what does building a house of wisdom look like?

Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge are three different attributes and we will discuss the contribution of each attribute to understand the fulness of Wisdom.

B. WATCH SESSION VIDEO

In this Session, Ps Chris Ong introduces us to the metaphor of building a life based on wisdom.

- Building a House of Wisdom
- Contrast between wise and foolish
- What does building a wise house look like?

C. READ SCRIPTURE: [Proverbs Chapters 1 to 7](#)

D. MAIN POINT

Living in Wisdom is like building a House

When King Solomon ascended to the throne of Israel at a young age, God appeared to him and ask what he wanted. Solomon replied, “*give to Your servant an understanding heart*” ([1 Kings 3:9](#)). The same encounter is recorded in [2 Chronicles 1:6](#) as “*Now give me wisdom and knowledge.*” Solomon could have just asked for wisdom but he asks for wisdom, understanding and knowledge. He knew the three attributes are required to obtain WISDOM.

Notice how the Lord replied... “*I have given you a wise and understanding heart*” ([1 Kings 3:12](#)) and in [2 Chronicles 1:12](#) it records “*wisdom and knowledge are granted to you.*” Wisdom, understanding and knowledge are required to obtain the fulness of Wisdom.

In our key verse for this Session, [Proverbs 24:3-4](#), Wisdom is seen as consisting of three attributes, each with function:

1. Wisdom builds the house
2. Understanding establishes the house
3. Knowledge fills the house

The building of a house is a figurative description of our lives. “Through wisdom our house is built, through understanding it is established and through knowledge our rooms are being filled with precious and pleasant riches”. All three are required to complete the building of a house. Not one of them can be omitted, and each compliment or builds upon another. For example, in mathematics, you cannot have an understanding of calculus if you do not have knowledge of simple multiplication.

Other examples of scriptures where two or more of these terms are mentioned together are Proverbs [2:10-11](#); [3:19-20](#); [4:5-7](#).

E. DISCUSSION

1. **What are some of the different areas of Wisdom? Can you give practical life examples of the three different attributes Wisdom, Understanding or Knowledge?**

Answer Guide: Do not confine wisdom to just intellectual wisdom. There is skill wisdom, diplomatic wisdom, social wisdom, etc

For example, in mathematics, you cannot have an understanding of calculus when you do not even have knowledge of simple multiplication. Wisdom is knowing how to apply calculus to solve a problem. The fruit comes from the attributes working together.

2. Read [Prov 9:10](#). How is the fear of the Lord beginning of wisdom?

*Answer Guide: In Proverbs 1:7, 9:10 the scripture states the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom. Point out that the fear of God is not the attainment of wisdom, but the **beginning** of wisdom. Having the fear of God in our lives helps us in the following ways (but not limited to these):*

- 1. It reminds us that the source of wisdom is from God and like King Solomon, we need to ask and seek God for His wisdom (cv. James 1:4).*
- 2. It guides us to the path of godly wisdom. It provides the moral compass to keep us in the path of wisdom undergirded by His Word, value and character.*
- 3. The fear of the Lord helps us to build the house and encourages us not to take shortcuts as it reminds us we are accountable and there are consequences to our actions.*

3. How do you build wisdom in your life? What are some of the practices or habits you have found effective?

Answer Guide: There is no right or wrong answer but we all need to keep active in making good choices.

The answer to this is linked to the first question but it will be an opportunity for people to share some of the things they actually do to grow in wisdom (not just what they think is a good idea).

Some possibilities could be by growing in knowledge (e.g. reading widely, talking to diverse groups of people, taking an interest in the more meaningful things in life, having a mentor, keeping mind clear, destressing, digging deep to understanding topics meaningful to them, reading scriptures, listening to podcasts), time with the Lord, listening to the Holy Spirit in daily activities, Prayer, mixing with other wise people (or staying away from those that may drag them down). Being careful what they do with their down time. The list is endless.

F. PRAYER

Share which aspect of wisdom you are lacking in your lives and pray for one another. Pray for any personal needs.

G. LOOKING FORWARD

In Session 2, we will look further at the Importance of Wisdom and how it is so relevant for us today.

SESSION 2

The Importance of Wisdom

Key Verse: *“Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, Because you disdained all my counsel, and would have none of my rebuke, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, when your terror comes like a storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you.” Proverbs 1:24-27 (NKJV)*

A. INTRODUCTION

King Solomon, the author of the bulk of Proverbs, is thought one of the wisest men that ever lived. But from the story of his moral failures and his writings in Ecclesiastes (Eccl 2:11), we learn that he struggled to always live with meaning and purpose. Through his story we learn that practical wisdom is not just the knowledge of wisdom, but it is choosing the way of wisdom, which maybe harder at times, and rejecting the seduction of the easier path.

There are consequences of the choices we make, and Proverbs makes it clear they can be a matter of life or death. Through his Spirit and by his word God is calling us every day to a life of wisdom, with him at the helm. Wisdom and folly each want to control our lives, and it is up to us to make the choice.

“We’re seeking to learn from Proverbs the divine principles that can make us skilful, not in making a living, but in making a life.” Warren Wiersbe

B. WATCH SESSION VIDEO

Ps Chris Ong highlights the following in this video session:

- Wisdom and the Temptress, the choice is yours
- The fruit of wisdom contrasted with the fruit of folly
- Consequences – advanced warning of taking the wrong path is beneficial for us.

C. READ SCRIPTURE: [Proverbs 1:7](#); [Proverbs 1:20-33](#); [James 1:25](#)

D. MAIN POINT

Consequences are Wisdom's best friend

Wisdom is essential for life. Wisdom isn't so far away we are unable grasp it. In two sections of Proverbs, 1:20-22 and 9:1-2, wisdom is like a person who calls out in the streets, open square, at the city gates and the heights of the city (Prov 8:1-3, 34). This paints a picture of Wisdom in the midst of society's hustle and bustle, reaching out and calling out openly trying to reach everyone to heed her message. She makes her strongest appeal to the simple, scoffers and fools, and warns of the consequence of folly.

The voice of wisdom competes the Temptress (Prov 9:13-18). This is a metaphor for the other easier alternatives, that look attractive, reasonable and pleasurable, but only lead to destruction or death of what you are trying to establish (Prov 1:32-33).

Wisdom's words are plain, spoken clearly and openly so there can be no confusion. For those who receive her message of Wisdom, they are rewarded (3:13-18) but to those who reject her by being foolish (proud), scoffing (unbelieving) or simple (gullible) they will reap what they sow (1:24-27). Unfortunately, sometimes it is too late to undo the path that produced them (1:30-32).

The simple truth is, there are consequences in your life when you refuse to heed the call of wisdom and give in to the temptress. Not that God punishes you, but he warns you of what may happen if the way of wisdom is rejected (Prov 1:31; Job 4:8, Galatians 6:7-10).

We are exhorted to grow in wisdom, but there will be little point unless we apply the wisdom that we already have been given.

*"Biblical wisdom begins with begins with a right relationship with the Lord. The wise person believes there is a God, that he is the creator and ruler of all things. And that he has put within his creation a divine order that, if **obeyed**, leads ultimately to success."*

Warren Wiersbe

E. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Read Proverbs 9 together and highlight the qualities that are present in Lady Wisdom and the Temptress Folly. Practice picking a verse and sharing the truth that is contained in it. Perhaps each person can speak to one verse?**

Answer Guide: This question will be practice for the next couple of sessions in this Homegroup Series as your group will start to unpack the verses in Proverbs. Here are some questions that can help your homegroup dig a bit deeper into Chapter 9:

- *What is the quality of Wisdom/Folly that is being highlighted in the verse that you've chosen?*
- *What is one practical life example of this quality that you've seen in your life? E.g. Proverbs 9:13 says that Folly is loud, seductive and knows nothing. This can be like a lot of the opinions that are shared on hip/cool influencer posts that are constantly shouting for your attention. They're often giving life advice from their present experience without the benefit of ancient wisdom or long-term consequences... often times, they aren't even qualified experts in an issue.*
- *How can we apply this principle into our lives?*

2. **Read Proverbs 1:24-27. Proverbs warns us of the consequences of rejecting wisdom. How do we know when we are listening to wisdom and when we are not?**

Answer Guide: We want to draw from people's life experiences. If people struggle with answering this question. Ask them to think of a time in their life where they made a mistake and it there was a bad consequence. Where there any signs beforehand that, in retrospect, they should have listened to? What would they do different if they had the time again and why? How can they be wiser in the future?

If we lack in applying godly wisdom, eventually cracks will appear that may cause our downfall. Take Solomon, for example, even though he was one of the wisest men that ever lived, he did not always apply wisdom to his own life. Eventually he failed.

Have a discussion about consequences and their role in teaching and leading us towards wisdom.

3. **Prepare for next week. What topic/passage will you study in preparation for the next Home Group Session?**

Answer Guide: To prepare for the next session, at the end of this session, you will need to assign people into groups to study particular topics.

Choose from the five topics listed. *In their own time, have the members read the scriptures relevant to their topics and note down any insights or understandings.*

During the discussion in the next session, the people studying the same topic can discuss together what they learned. Then have one person from each group to share with everyone.

F. RAYER

Pray for humility before God in that we are not only smart but wise

G. LOOKING FORWARD

In Session 3, we will look at some Areas of Wisdom (Part 1). During the session you will briefly summarise the topic have you chosen to study. **What are three key teachings you have received?**

1. **Finance** – Proverbs gives practical advice to be financially wise. Some advice for success is well known, but others are not taught in any business school. Read the following verses and discuss how it can apply to make the most of your labour and income.
Proverbs [3:9](#), [10](#); [10:4](#); [11:15](#); [11:24](#); [12:11](#); [13:23](#); [14:4](#); [14:15](#); [21:17](#); [21:20](#); [28:22](#); [30:25](#)
2. **Counsel** – A multitude of counsellors can save you from you! Proverbs repeatedly called for testing ideas by ideas. It is easy to be too emotional about your ideas, and miss the forest for the trees, or lack of others' expertise and experiences. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [12:15](#); [15:22](#); [19:20](#); [20:18](#); [24:6](#); [25:5](#)
3. **Attitudes** – A wrong attitude colours and clouds a person's life into troubled mess. Others choose right attitude to be happy, and continual feast. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [14:30](#); [15:13](#); [15:15](#); [17:22](#); [18:14](#)
4. **Adultery** – Marriage vows are not to be taken lightly. Covenants are not just to be broken or tampered with, entering into a relationship with another woman – married or single is not only breaking your sacred oath, it is adultery. The commandments say, "Thou shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). That's reason enough to keep you from adultery. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [5:3-18](#); [6:23-35](#); [30:20](#)
5. **Speech** – Speech reveals character and indicates future. The heart is revealed by listening to a person's speech. Words prove honesty or falsity; they provide health or pain to others; they cut or heal.
Proverbs [10:19](#); [10:32](#); [11:13](#); [12:18](#); [13:3](#); [15:1](#); [15:28](#); [18:21](#); [21:23](#); [22:11](#); [26:4](#); [26:28](#); [29:20](#); [31:29](#)

SESSION 3

Areas of Wisdom (Part 1)

Key Passage: *“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise” Ephesians 5:15 (ESV)*

A. INTRODUCTION

When reading through Proverbs we find that a number of the short instructions cover similar topics. Solomon wrote over 3,000 wise sayings (1 Kings 4:32), however the Holy Spirit selected only some of them. These are the ones which are relevant to every age as they highlight the common issues any one of us can encounter.

In the first of two similar sessions, we will take time to study these topics and learn the way of wisdom given in scripture.

Proverbs are short statements that use a few words to convey practical truths relating to some aspect of everyday life.

B. WATCH SESSION VIDEO

In this session video, Ps. Chris Ong prepares us for a detailed look at the book of Proverbs with the many miscellaneous saying contained within it.

C. READ SCRIPTURE: See Discussion Section for the relevant passages for this Session

D. MAIN POINT

The writers of the book recognised the varied circumstances of a person's life and provided principles to apply in a variety of situations rather than instructions to follow in only a few specific instances.

In this session, your home group will be able to choose from the list topics and will take time to study the relevant passages in Proverbs before discussing how they can apply the practical Wisdom in their lives.

E. DISCUSSION

Divide into five groups and each select one of the topics. Study the relevant passages in Proverbs. **What are three key learnings from each topic?**

People studying the same topic can discuss together what insights they have learned from the scripture. Ask one person from each group take notes and share a summary with the whole group of three key teachings they got from the study. If time permits you can discuss further.

1. **Finance** – Proverbs gives practical advice to be financially wise. Some advice for success is well known, but others are not taught in any business school. Read the following verses and discuss how it can apply to make the most of your labour and income.
Proverbs [3:9](#), [10](#); [10:4](#); [11:15](#); [11:24](#); [12:11](#); [13:23](#); [14:4](#); [14:15](#); [21:17](#); [21:20](#); [28:22](#); [30:25](#)
2. **Counsel** – A multitude of counsellors can save you from you! Proverbs repeatedly called for testing ideas by ideas. It is easy to be too emotional about your ideas, and miss the forest for the trees, or lack of others' expertise and experiences. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [12:15](#); [15:22](#); [19:20](#); [20:18](#); [24:6](#); [25:5](#)
3. **Attitudes** – A wrong attitude colours and clouds a person's life into troubled mess. Others choose right attitude to be happy, and continual feast. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [14:30](#); [15:13](#); [15:15](#); [17:22](#); [18:14](#)
4. **Adultery** – Marriage vows are not to be taken lightly. Covenants are not just to be broken or tampered with, entering into a relationship with another woman – married or single is not only breaking your sacred oath, it is adultery. The commandments say, "Thou shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). That's reason enough to keep you from adultery. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [5:3-18](#); [6:23-35](#); [30:20](#)
5. **Speech** – Speech reveals character and indicates future. The heart is revealed by listening to a person's speech. Words prove honesty or falsity; they provide health or pain to others; they cut or heal.
Proverbs [10:19](#); [10:32](#); [11:13](#); [12:18](#); [13:3](#); [15:1](#); [15:28](#); [18:21](#); [21:23](#); [22:11](#); [26:4](#); [26:28](#); [29:20](#); [31:29](#)

Briefly summarise the topics have you chosen to study. What are three key teachings you have received?

F. PRAYER

Pray for the group as they prepare and study for the next session. In particular, ask God to show wise ways to apply the teachings.

G. LOOKING FORWARD

In Session 4, we will look at some of Areas of Wisdom (Part 2). Select which topic you want to study before the next meeting. When you meet discuss in groups to briefly summarise the topic have you chosen to study. **Share with the whole group three key teachings you have received.**

1. **Success** – Proverbs teaches you simple rules that will bring blessing to your life and keep trouble away.
Proverbs [3:13-18](#); [15:17](#); [15:22](#); [16:20](#); [22:4](#); [22:11](#); [27:18](#); [28:13](#); [28:20](#); [31:12](#)
2. **Pride vs Humility** – Pride will destroy you. God guarantees it. The sin of the devil, it is a sure sign a person or nation is going down, no matter how powerful or successful they appear. Choose humility and it will bring you honour. Read the following verses and discuss.
Pride – Prov [8:13](#); [11:2](#); [13:10](#); [15:25](#); [16:18](#); [18:12](#); [21:4](#); [28:25](#).
Humility – Prov [3:7](#); [3:34](#); [11:2](#); [16:19](#); [18:12](#); [20:6](#); [22:4](#); [25:27](#); [27:2](#); [29:23](#)
3. **Envy** – You can hide it in your heart, but it eats at you day and night, does nothing to the person you hate! It is rottenest in your bones and will corrupt your spirit and body. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [17:4](#); [23:17-18](#); [24:1-2](#)
4. **Relationships** – Relationships are a crucial part of your life to please God, helps others and prosper yourself. Add this practical wisdom to your life and rise higher. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [13:20](#); [15:1](#); [17:17](#); [18:19](#); [18:24](#); [22:10](#); [22:11](#); [25:15](#); [25:20](#); [27:17](#); [29:15](#)
5. **Habits** – What wrong, immoral, wicked habit or practice control or corrupt you? Which good habits preserve you and give you favour? Proverbs addresses these areas that enslave and ruin, or alternative benefit our lives. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [5:19](#); [11:13](#); [14:6](#); [14:14](#); [14:15](#); [15:15](#); [16:18](#); [16:32](#); [19:24](#); [25:28](#); [27:4](#); [29:1](#)

SESSION 4

Areas of Wisdom (Part 2)

Key Verse: *“Foolishness brings joy to those with no sense; a sensible person stays on the right path.” Proverbs 15:21 (NLT)*

A. INTRODUCTION

When reading through Proverbs we find that a number of the short instructions cover similar topics. These highlight the common issues we face in everyday living.

In the last session we looked at the topics: finance, counsel, attitudes, adultery and speech. In this session we will study what Proverbs says about Success, Pride v Humility, Envy, Relationships, Habits – good and bad. These are not just superficial topics, but things that impact each one of us in the course of life. The instructions given are good, but we also need wisdom to know when and where they should be applied.

Tips: Wisdom is needed in the application

B. WATCH SESSION VIDEO

In this session video, Ps. Chris Ong.

- Unpacking the book of Proverbs
- Digging deep into the book of proverbs.
- Need wisdom to know when to apply the wise instruction to your life.

C. MAIN POINT

The writers of the book recognised the varied circumstances of a person’s life and provided principles to apply in a variety of situations rather than instructions to follow in only a few specific instances.

In this session, your home group will be able to choose from the list topics and will take time to study the relevant passages in Proverbs before discussing how they can apply the practical Wisdom in their lives.

D. DISCUSSION

Divide into groups, with each group taking one topic. In your discussion, include a question on when you should or should not apply the wisdom to your life. What is the wise thing to do?

1. **Success** – Proverbs teaches you simple rules that will bring blessing to your life and keep trouble away.
Proverbs [3:13-18](#); [15:17](#); [15:22](#); [16:20](#); [22:4](#); [22:11](#); [27:18](#); [28:13](#); [28:20](#); [31:12](#)
2. **Pride vs Humility** – Pride will destroy you. God guarantees it. The sin of the devil, it is a sure sign a person or nation is going down, no matter how powerful or successful they appear. Choose humility and it will bring you honour. Read the following verses and discuss.
Pride – Prov [8:13](#); [11:2](#); [13:10](#); [15:25](#); [16:18](#); [18:12](#); [21:4](#); [28:25](#).
Humility – Prov [3:7](#); [3:34](#); [11:2](#); [16:19](#); [18:12](#); [20:6](#); [22:4](#); [25:27](#); [27:2](#); [29:23](#)
3. **Envy** – You can hide it in your heart, but it eats at you day and night, does nothing to the person you hate! It is rottenest in your bones and will corrupt your spirit and body. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [17:4](#); [23:17-18](#); [24:1-2](#)
4. **Relationships** – Relationships are a crucial part of your life to please God, helps others and prosper yourself. Add this practical wisdom to your life and rise higher. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [13:20](#); [15:1](#); [17:17](#); [18:19](#); [18:24](#); [22:10](#); [22:11](#); [25:15](#); [25:20](#); [27:17](#); [29:15](#)
5. **Habits** – What wrong, immoral, wicked habit or practice control or corrupt you? Which good habits preserve you and give you favour? Proverbs addresses these areas that enslave and ruin, or alternative benefit our lives. Read the following verses and discuss.
Proverbs [5:19](#); [11:13](#); [14:6](#); [14:14](#); [14:15](#); [15:15](#); [16:18](#); [16:32](#); [19:24](#); [25:28](#); [27:4](#); [29:1](#)

E. PRAYER

Pray for wisdom for the application of the scripture discussed today.

F. LOOKING FORWARD

In our last session, Session 5, we will look at Proverbs 31 and the personification of wisdom. Before the next meeting, have the members read Proverbs 31 and write down any insights and understanding from the scriptures associated with the topics. These can be discussed in the groups at the beginning of the session, before sharing a summary with the main group.

It might be helpful to allocate individuals to share/investigate/meditate on a particular verse or quality of wisdom found in Proverbs 31. Again, here are some helpful questions to ask as you delve deeper into the qualities of Wisdom embodied.

- What is the quality of Wisdom that is being highlighted in the verse that you've chosen?
- What is one practical life example of this quality that you've seen in your life?

How can we apply this principle into our lives?

SESSION 5

Wisdom Embodied

Key Passage: *"An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels"*
Proverbs 31:10 (ESV)

A. INTRODUCTION

In the first four sessions we have looked at , including

- How to build Wisdom in our lives
- The Importance of wisdom (and consequences of folly)
- Areas of Wisdom (Session 3 & 4)

In this final session we will have an opportunity to undertake a detailed study of the final chapter of Proverbs to see a picture of the embodiment of Wisdom as she is personified as a woman.

This portrait of wisdom was written to help people imagine and remember the excellence of practical wisdom. A life married to wisdom bears great rewards, she will serve you when you work together with her.

Proverbs 31 gives us a final picture of what Wisdom serves you as you commit to her like a marriage

B. WATCH SESSION VIDEO

This final video explains how the final chapter of Proverbs provides a picture of what it looks like when wisdom is lived out. This portrait of wisdom was written to help people to be able to imagine the fruit of practical wisdom. Wisdom has the potential to reward you when you commit (marry) and work together with her.

C. READ SCRIPTURE: [Proverbs 31:10-31](#)

D. MAIN POINT

Lady Wisdom is the embodiment of Wisdom

Why do you suppose the Proverbs chose to conclude this book of wisdom by devoting most of the final chapter to the subject of a virtuous woman? For over thirty chapters Proverbs has been describing and discussing practical wisdom. Now it culminates with a verbal portrait of the virtuous woman? Why? What has virtue to do with wisdom? Clearly, the portrayal of this woman must bear some relation to the theme of the rest of the book... The virtuous woman is the Personification or Embodiment of the wisdom of God.

The portrait of a woman is used to show what the embodiment of wisdom looks like as we commit to her ways and marry her for life.

E. DISCUSSION

Read Proverbs 31:10-31 then discuss. You may wish to break into groups and each group study a few verses within the section Proverbs 31:10-31. Read each of the verses assigned to your group, discuss their meaning and application. Have one person share their findings with the rest of the group.

Read the verses below and discuss “What does your life look like to be married to Wisdom?”

A) Prov 31:10 “Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies”

Answer Guide: This points to the enormous value of Wisdom. Far above precious jewels and monetary worth. How much would you pay for Wisdom?

B) Prov 31:11-13 “The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.”

Answer Guide: This points to the character of Wisdom and the ability for it to provide for you.

C) Prov 31:13-15 “She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands. She is like the merchant ships; she brings her food from afar. She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants.... She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.”

Answer Guide: Wisdom is not lazy, she works hard, is responsible and willing to help others.

- D) Prov 31:16-18a, 24 “She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she plants a vineyard. She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms. She perceives that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out by night... She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants.”**

Answer Guide: The Investment of Wisdom. Wisdom helps you in your investments

- E) Prov 31:19-20 “She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hand holds the spindle. She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.”**

Answer Guide: The Generosity of Wisdom – Wisdom makes you generous

- F) Prov 31:21 “She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet.”**

Answer Guide: The Protection of Wisdom – When you have wisdom, she will protect you

- G) Prov 31:22 “She makes tapestry for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple.”**

Answer Guide: The Beauty of Wisdom. The virtuous woman here wears silk and purple. Both of these are terms that denote richness of material and design. godly wisdom makes you “beautiful” and attractive to others.

- H) Prov 31:23 “Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.”**

Answer Guide: The Promotion of Wisdom – “in the gates” refers to the commercial, political and religious centre of the city, the place where the “elders” or officials meet to carry on the affairs of state and society.

- I) Prov 31:25 “Strength and honor are her clothing; she shall rejoice in time to come.”**

Answer Guide: The Prudence of Wisdom – Wisdom makes you prudence

- J) Prov 31:26 “She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness.”**

Answer Guide: The Gracefulness and Kindness of Wisdom (verse 26) – Wisdom gives you graciousness & kindness in speech.

- K) Prov 31:28-31 “Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: many daughters have done well, but you excel them all.” Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be**

praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.”

Answer Guide: The Reward of Wisdom. You will be honoured and rewarded when you have wisdom.

F. PRAYER

Pray for one another to desire for more wisdom in our lives. If there are any specific areas of need pray to be able to recognise, receive and follow the path of wisdom the Holy Spirit provides.

G. WRAP UP

What was the most memorable Proverb/verse throughout the whole series? What insight will you take forward with you after this series ends. If you feel that you haven't learned anything (or if you feel that you've only heard things that you already know) ... perhaps consider a deeper dive into the Book of Proverbs. It's a book that has intrigued philosophers, theologians and wise people for millennia.

Books for further study on Proverbs include:

- “The Wisdom Books” by Robert Alter
- “Be Skillful (Proverbs)” by Warren W. Wiersbe
- “Living the Proverbs: Insights for the Daily Grind” by Charles R. Swindoll

We would value feedback from the group as to how the series went. What were the best parts and what was the most challenging.