

Wisdom for Living – Week 1

Before we begin this series on Proverbs, please read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. God, through the Apostle Paul, says that all scriptures are God breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped to do every good work. Pray that God will use these studies to teach, rebuke, correct and train you in preparation for every good work He has planned for you to do (Ephesians 2:10).

Group One - The Word on 'our words'

Read the following verses...

- 10:18; 16:28; 17:9; 20:19
- 10:14; 10:19; 18:6-7; 29:20
- 15:23; 16:13; 17:27; 1 Peter 2:22

...and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about how we use our words.

How do you use words? Which of the Proverbs spoke to you in either affirmation or rebuke?

Read out the specific verses which summarise what you present.

Group Two - Justice

Read the following verses (3:31-35; 16:8; 28:5; 29:26; and Romans 12:17-21) and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about:

- Justice in Proverbs
- God and justice
- Earthly ruler and justice
- Man and justice
- NT and justice

Reflect on and memorise Micah 6:8

Wisdom for Living – Week 2

Group One - Authority

Read the following verses (20:28; 21:1; 24:21; 28:2-4) and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about:

- What is the advice for those in positions of authority
- What is the advice for those under authority
- Who is our ultimate authority (Matthew 28:18)

What do you think about being under another person's authority?

What does it mean for you to be under authority:

- As part of the church (Hebrews 13:17)?
- At work?
- In Australia (Romans 13:1)?

Does Luke 20:20-26 help your thinking in the above in any way?

Group Two - Sexuality

Read the following verses (5:3-4; 6:27-29; and 5:15-23; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7-8) and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about:

- The nature of sexual temptation
- The consequences of adultery
- Practical sexual advice

Be willing to start asking the hard questions of each other (this is important for guys and girls) - how is your sexual purity going? How do you help the sexual purity of your friends? How can you grow in purity?

A quotable quote:

“If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to

hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, foolish about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased¹.

Some possible prayers for sexual purity:

God, thank you for making me a sexual creature with sexual desires! I don't ask that you remove my desire, but that you help me to please you with it in my thoughts and actions.

God, in this moment my whole body seems to be screaming for sexual satisfaction – would you please quiet my desires? My body was made for you and for holiness, not for sexual sin. Help me to glorify you with my body.

God, you made me for true and lasting pleasure! Fill me with confidence that you have good things in store for me – something much better than what lust has to offer.

God, thank you for beauty and for my ability to appreciate it. But let me look on beauty with purity. I don't want to covet and lust. Help me to view people made as a person in your image, not an object of my lust.

God, I'm tempted to look to lust for comfort right now. Please help me find comfort in you.

¹ C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, p25-26

Wisdom for Living – Week 3

Group One - Parents and Children

Read the following verses (3:5-6; 14:26; 22:6; 29:17; Matthew 14:26-27 and Ephesians 6:1) and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about:

- Instructions for children
- Instructions for parents

Group Two - Friendship

Read the following verses (17:17; 18:24; 27:6; 27:9; 27:17) and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about:

- The basis of friendship
- Friendship's to be avoided
- Qualities of true friendship
- Faithful friends counsel and encourage each other
- Friends must be tactful and sensitive to each other

Questions to ask:

What sort of friend are you?

What sort of friends do you have?

Wisdom for Living – Week 4

Group One - Alcohol

Read the following verses (20:1; 23:19-21; 23:29-35; Luke 22:17-18; John 2:1-11; and Ephesians 5:18-20) and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about alcohol.

Group Two - Money

Read the following verses (3:9-10; 19:1; 19:17; 28:6; 30:7-9; 31:20) and present what the book of Proverbs has to say about money.

How does this affect the way you see wealthy / poverty? How does this affect the way you use money?