

## Proverbs 30: Are You Growing in Wisdom?

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The Book of Proverbs / Proverbs 30:1–33

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### Introduction

- <https://qz.com/986221/what-know-it-alls-dont-know-or-the-illusion-of-competence> - Dunning-Kruger effect -
- We have a tendency to think that we know more than we really do. It's why some of us in school thought we did really well on a test only to get back a score that was much lower than we thought it would be.
- We are coming to an end of the Book of Proverbs. As begin to conclude, a simple question: Are you as wise as you think you are?
- **Remember the definition of wisdom:** Seeing God for who He is and responding to Him in worship and obedience on His terms for His glory is wisdom.
- This morning, we're looking at a unique passage of Scripture, and I want to show you five ways you can know you are growing in wisdom.

### You know your limitations.

- The end of the Book of Proverbs contains two unique poems. The first poem is attributed to Agur, a man whom we know nothing about. We also know about Ithiel and Ucal.
- Agur didn't think very highly of himself. "I am more stupid than any other person" (vs. 2). You ever thought that about yourself? Would you ever write that about yourself for everyone to read?

- Agur doesn't see himself as wise (vs. 3). He doesn't even see himself as someone who has knowledge of God, although as we continue to read, we're going to discover that Agur knows more about God than many of us in this room.
- What Agur does know is that he's limited. Generally, the more you grow in wisdom, the more you realize how much more you need to grow in wisdom. Think about the different topics in Proverbs we've studied over the last few months: speech, anger, pride, family, sex, money, etc. You've grown in your wisdom regarding what God says about these subjects, and you've probably realized that in each of those areas you're not as wise as you thought you were.
- Vs. 4 - how can we really know God? No one has done what He's done. No one has gone up to heaven and come down. No one has bound up the waters or established the ends of the earth.
- Agur so confounded by God, he asks the question, "What is his name?" Or, "Do I even know this God? Is it even possible to know this God?" Do you ever feel that way? And, "What is the name of his son?" That's an odd question. Why is Agur interested in the name of God's son? In OT, Israel was God's son ([Exodus 4:22](#)) who was supposed to show the Father to the world through their love and obedience to the Father. Israel was God's chosen people, He was their Father. However, Israel was not the son they were supposed to be. They didn't look like their father.
- Even though Israel looked nothing like their Father, God loves His people. God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus ([John 3:16](#)). Jesus is the ultimate answer to the question that Agur asks in [Proverbs 30:4](#). Jesus is the Son of God, and Jesus is the way we know the Father. Jesus is the True Israel - He is the Son who really does show us the Father.
- Jesus is the wisdom of God. He is the One who succeeded where Israel failed. Jesus loved the Father while Israel failed to love the Father. Jesus obeyed the Father while Israel disobeyed. Ultimately, we're a

bunch of fools, but Jesus is wisdom for us. Jesus is the ONE who in the wisdom of God went to the cross and died the death we deserve only to rise from the dead so our sins could be forgiven and we could be given the gift of eternal life.

- Agur is concluding what all of us would conclude - we're limited and finite beings. Not only are we finite, we're sinful. Our sin nature hinders our ability to grow in wisdom.
- In Proverbs, we've learned that we have a long way to go to grow in wisdom. Proverbs is not intended to show us how wise we are. It is intended to show us how unwise we are and how desperately we need a wise Savior. When you know you're limitations you know:
  - **There's no room for theological pride.** Some of us struggle with "I know more about God than you," and we look down on others who do not have the amount of Bible knowledge that we do.
  - **There's no room for moral pride.** Some of us struggle with, "I live better than you," and we look down on others who do not live with the same moral standard that we do.
  - **There's no room for service pride.** Some of us struggle with, "I do more in the church than you," and we look down on others who don't do as much as we do.
- We're all limited. You don't know as much about God as you think you know, you aren't as good as you think you are, and you don't do as much as you think you do. This is why you need a Savior.
- The rest of the chapter are Agur's reflections on wisdom. We're going to fly through these verses, but when you understand your limitations and God's unlimited power to work in your life, you're going to come to some of the same wise conclusions Agur comes to.

## You know you need God's Word.

- In Agur's realization of His own limitation, he realizes who is not limited: God Himself. Our God, who is not limited, has revealed Himself in His Word. If that's true, you desperately need God's Word. Since God's Word is true, you can absolutely trust what He says.
- **You add to God's Word whenever you assume you know what God says without seeking out what God actually says.** We speak in folksy theology that we've heard someone else say, but we haven't taken the time to actually know God's Word. (God helps those who help themselves, or God will never give you any more than you can handle.) Be careful! Agur gives a warning! God Himself will rebuke you because there is no refuge in bad theology.
- **You're going to be restless until you settle in your heart that God's Word is always a refuge for your soul.** Folksy theology isn't going to give you refuge, the pursuit of worldly comforts is not going to give you refuge. In fact, nothing will give you real refuge but God's Word itself. "Our heart is restless until it rests in you" (Augustine, *Confessions*). I've found that to be true.
- Mormon faith adding to the Word of God - the heartbreak of seeing people in a cult.

## You know you need contentment.

- When you know your limitations, and you find refuge in God's Word, you'll experience contentment.
- Contentment is a struggle! Agur asks for two things: "Keep me honest and keep me content" (vs. 8).
- "Give me neither poverty or wealth." If you have wealth, you become overly focused on what you have and it's never enough. If you are in

poverty, always worried about what you don't have and you become mad at God.

- Ultimately, "Give us this day our daily bread" ([Matthew 6:11](#)).
- **What do you believe is a better life?** More comfort/stuff or more intimacy with Christ?
- **How do your daily pursuits reveal your convictions about what you believe is a better life?** Most of us would say more intimacy with Christ is the better life, yet we do not actually pursue intimacy with Christ.
- What will it take for you to actually start pursuing a better life?

## You know you need holiness.

- vs. 10 - 20 - a series of warnings against foolish/sinful ways to live.
- Agur notices generations that dishonors the Lord by not honoring their parents (listening to past generations), not walking in purity, being prideful (vs. 13), ripping people apart with words (vs. 14). He sees people who are never satisfied (vs. 15-16), and who are given to adultery (vs. 18-20).
- The imagery is provocative. Consider [Proverbs 30:20](#): "This is the way of an adulteress: she eats and wipes her mouth and says, 'I've done nothing wrong.'" This is how our present culture views what God calls sin: "I've done nothing wrong." This is how some of you as followers of Jesus think of your own sin. "I've done nothing wrong."
- Sin is foolishness, but pursuing a life of holiness is wise (A fool's way is right in his own eyes, but whoever listens to counsel is wise - [Proverbs 12:15](#)).
- "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires" ([Romans 6:12](#)).

- **You're always going to be at war with your sin nature, but you can't stop fighting.** Some of you have stopped fighting because you've become convinced that the way of this world is right side up.
- **A wise life desires to live right side up in an upside down world.** The enemy deceives you to think that joy is conforming to this world, but real joy and contentment is found in conforming to Christ ([Romans 12:2](#)).
- What sin(s) do you need to go to war with right now?

## You know you need to be in awe.

- In the last verses of this chapter, Agur draws our attention to small animals that he considers extremely wise.
- Each of these creatures has skill. Wisdom has far more to do with skill - how you live out the revelation of God - than IQ or what you know.
- Ants produce, hyraxes are able to live in extreme places, locusts are able to work orderly, a lizard is able to make its home anywhere, even the palaces of kings. After describing the small, he describes the lion, the rooster, and the goat who all strut with confidence.
- **Take more time to ponder how God's good design is imprinted all over His creation.** In creation, you see the wisdom of God everywhere - even in how the creatures of this world survive and thrive. Get off your screens and enjoy the world that God has created so that it might lead you to be in awe of Him.
- **Take more time to ponder how God's image is imprinted on you.** vs. 32 - You're often in awe of yourself, and if you are constantly in awe of you, put your hand over your mouth - be quiet. Just like the constant churning of milk produces butter and the constant twisting of a nose produces nosebleeds, a constant exaltation of self produces strife. BUT - a right view of self (vs. 1-4) produces awe of God.

- How much more precious is your life than the lives of animals - you were created in His image. You were created to display the glory of God through your words, your actions, and your character. Wisdom is living out who God created you to be.
- Be in awe - Agur and Solomon both knew the impossibility of living the life that God intended us to live. But, Jesus, the Son of God, lived the life God intended us to live for us, then went to the cross to die in our place for our sins only to rise from the dead to give us the gift of everlasting life. The wisest thing you will ever do with your life is give it to Jesus - is to place all of your hope and faith in Him, to learn to walk with Him, to learn to have a relationship with Him. Only He can make you wise.