

Proverbs 1:1-7: You Need Godly Wisdom

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The Book of Proverbs / Proverbs 1:1–7

MPT: Solomon wanted his sons to understand that their ongoing need for wisdom was found by constantly fearing the Lord.

MPS: I want you to see your ongoing need for godly wisdom is found by constantly fearing the Lord.

Introduction

- Harvard University may be the most prestigious university in the United States. Last year about 57,000 students applied, only around 2,000 accepted - 3%. Imagine being one of the students and checking out a book bound in human skin! Outrage at Harvard - Not a wise decision to have that book on the shelf! <https://www.foxnews.com/us/harvard-apologizes-removes-creepy-book-binding-made-human-skin-past-failures>
- Many decisions that others make that you say, “That wasn’t a wise decision.” You yourself have probably made decisions where later on you said, “That was not a wise decision. That was foolish.”
- We need wisdom in every area of life. Some of you are facing situations right now where you desperately want to make a wise decision. You need wisdom to have a successful marriage. You need wisdom to do well on your job. You need wisdom navigate friendships. You need wisdom to raise your children well. You need wisdom to handle your finances well. You need wisdom to be able to navigate the difficult seasons of life.

- The Book of Proverbs helps you make wise decisions, and all wise decisions are rooted in our understanding of who God is and what He wants for us. This morning, we start a journey through Proverbs - a book all about the wisdom of God.
- **Transition:** vs. 1-7 the intro to Proverbs - As we begin our study of Proverbs, I want to answer two questions about godly wisdom.

Why do you need godly wisdom?

- vs. 1-7 are the introduction to the book.
- vs. 1 - “The Proverbs of Solomon, son of David...” Solomon known as the wisest man in his day, at least until the end of his life when he acted foolishly.
- [Proverbs 1-9](#) -Solomon’s poems to his sons. Solomon wants his sons to be wise because one of his sons will be the king. Israel needs a wise king because as goes the king, so goes the nation. Solomon challenging sons to chase after Lady Wisdom and flee from Lady Folly.
- [Proverbs 10-31](#) are individual proverbs. Many by Solomon, but also proverbs by various authors. The book ends with proverbs from two gentiles: Agur and King Lemuel.
- [1 Kings 4:30-34](#) - Solomon wrote over 3,000 proverbs. The Book of Proverbs is a collection of SOME of his proverbs.
- Proverbs are principles NOT promises. When you live out God’s wisdom, generally the outcome in this life will be favorable, but you live in a fallen world. Sometimes, even when you live out God’s wisdom, the outcome will not be what you thought it would be. (e.g., [Prov. 22:6](#))
- **We need godly wisdom because we are naturally foolish.**
 - [Proverbs 22:15](#) - No one is born wise. Wisdom is learned, and we need good teachers to teach us wisdom.

- In the Book of Proverbs, a constant contrast between wisdom and folly. [Proverbs 17:12](#) - You are safer when you confront a wild bear than you are being a fool.
- In Proverbs, foolishness is living a life that refuses to embrace God's wisdom. Foolishness is an inability and resistance to discern and live out God's will.
- **We need godly wisdom because we need correction.**
 - vs. 2 - "for learning wisdom and discipline." Discipline can also be translated as *correction*. The goal of discipline is to correct ([Proverbs 6:23](#)).
 - You are foolish when you refuse to be corrected by those who are wise than you (vs. 7).
 - To be a fool is to be stubborn or bullheaded. Many of us are stubborn. We don't want to be corrected because we think we know it all.
 - Solomon tells us who needs discipline/correction:
 - The Simple (vs. 4) - Simple people are people who are inexperienced and lack knowledge. Simple people aren't fools. Simple people are teachable ([Proverbs 8:5](#)). A simple person may be someone who is new to Christianity. A new Christian is inexperienced and lacks knowledge but has a desire to grow and learn.
 - The young (vs. 4) - If you are young, you are foolish NOT to listen to those who are older than you, who have more experience walking with the Lord than you do.
 - The wise and discerning (vs. 5) - You never outgrow your need to grow in wisdom. The moment you stop growing in wisdom is the moment you start regressing in your walk with the Lord.
 - We all need wisdom, and it is foolishness to be so stubborn that you reject the correction of others who want to help you grow in wisdom.

What about you? Are you stubborn? Are you bullheaded? Or, are you humble and teachable?

- **We need godly wisdom to know how to live righteously and treat others with justice (vs. 3).**
 - vs. 3 - we need prudent instruction. Prudence is the ability to navigate the complexities of life as you walk in the fear of the Lord. You can't live a life that pleases God (righteous) without prudent wisdom.
 - Wisdom is relational. Fools treat people poorly. Fools put their own needs first. Wise people put the needs of others above their own. How many of us have ruined relationships with our foolishness? With our hurtful actions? With our hurtful words? We need godly wisdom to know how to treat others in the way we want to be treated.

How do you get godly wisdom?

- **You get godly wisdom by fearing the Lord.** We're six verses in, and we haven't defined godly wisdom. However, vs. 7 helps us define godly wisdom.
- vs. 7 similar to [Proverbs 9:10](#) - "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."
- Fear of the Lord is a desire to draw close to God while knowing that foolishness (sin) keeps us from God. ([Genesis 15](#) - Holy terror that comes over Abraham, [Exodus 3](#) - Moses at burning bush, [Exodus 19](#) - Hebrews at Mt. Sinai, [Joshua 5](#) - Joshua in the presence of the commander of the Lord's army, [Isaiah 6](#) - Isaiah's vision of God). People wanting to draw close to God but know the foolishness of their sin keeps them at a distance from the Holy God of the universe.
- Fear of the Lord is to want to be close to God while at the same time knowing who God is and know who I am. God is perfect and holy. He is the creator and sovereign King of the universe. To fear the Lord is to

know that ultimately, I am accountable to Him for every thought I have, every action I take, every word I say, and every decision I make ([Hebrews 4:13](#)).

- Fear of the Lord results in longing for a Savior who will bring us into a close relationship with God, who will forgive our sins, and give us peace with God.
- It is foolish to live as if you are accountable to no one but yourself.
- **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. Making choices solely for the desire to honor God because of what He's done for you is real, godly wisdom.
- Fools hate wisdom and correction. Fools live with a lack of the fear of the Lord.
- Fools constantly think about the present. "How will my choices affect my here and now? Will this choice bring me pleasure now?" Wise people think about the end. "How will my choices bring glory to God and conform me to His will?" Wise people are willing to endure suffering in the here and now because their eyes are on the long term goal: to glorify God and be like Jesus.
- Do you fear the Lord? Do you live your life with a constant awareness that your life is accountable to God? Do you live your life with a constant awareness of your need for Jesus?
- **You get godly wisdom by submitting to the King.**
- In these opening chapters, Solomon addressing his son or sons. One day his son would take the throne, and the nation of Israel desperately needed whoever sat on the throne to be a wise king.

- Solomon knew his own need for wisdom. In [1 Kings 3](#), he asked God to give him wisdom instead of wealth, power, and fame. Solomon knew Israel needed a wise king.
- 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles shows a pattern in Israel. When a wise king sat on the throne (one who followed in the ways of King David by putting God first) the nation of Israel flourished. When a foolish king sat on a throne, the nation turned to idolatry.
- Wisdom is powerful. If you live in wisdom, you will be a godly influence on the lives of others. If you live foolishly, you will negatively influence others.
- While Israel had some wise kings, none of them were truly wise. Solomon wasn't a wise leader. He failed God miserably at the end of his life. Even the kings that came after Solomon who led in the ways of David had their moments of foolishness (e.g., Hezekiah, Uzziah, Josiah and Jehoshaphat were all good kings who made unwise decisions.)
- Tragedy: foolishness would eventually lead Israel into exile, but all hope was not lost. A promise to King David that one would come from his lineage and be the leader Israel needed. A truly wise king that we all need!
- [1 Corinthians 1:30](#) - "It is from him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom from God for us - our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption..." Jesus is the greater Solomon ([Matthew 12:42](#)). Jesus is the wisdom of God. Jesus is the wise King we need.
- Jesus is the only person to ever perfectly live out the wisdom of God. He lived out the wisdom of God for you. Every choice He made was wise. Every word He said was wise. Every thought He had was wise. Wisdom is living out the will of God for the glory of God, and that's exactly what Jesus did. In wisdom, Jesus went to the cross and died the death that we deserve and rose again from the dead to bring us into a relationship

with God. In wisdom, Jesus accomplished the purpose that the Father sent Him to earth for.

- More than Proverbs shows us what we can do, it shows us what we can't do. Solomon calls us to wisdom, but everyone of us fails to walk in wisdom. As we study the Book of Proverbs, we're going to be reminded over and over again that we're not as wise as we think we are. We're also going to be reminded that we need a King who is truly wise, who lived a wise life for us, who now lives within us empowering us to live wise lives. We can't live wisely without Jesus empowering us.
- The wisest decision you will ever make is to surrender your life to Jesus, to believe that He died and rose again for you and commit to a life lived for His glory.
- Follower of Jesus, the wisest decision you will is to get up every morning and submit to your wise King by saying, "Not my will, but your will be done."
- Let us all repent of our foolishness and ask God to help us live in His wisdom ([James 1:5](#)).