

Monday:

As we are learning in this series, the Book of Proverbs is a book of wisdom literature, in which general principles are expressed in concise sayings. As we learn to apply these principles to our specific life situations and relationships—using discernment under the direction of the Holy Spirit—God will work to make us wise over time. In this series we are learning what it means to live a life characterized by God’s wisdom, in comparison to living in foolishness and evil. This week we will learn how to spot wisdom in a person as well as how to become a person of wisdom using the book of Proverbs as our guide. One of the ways to spot wisdom in a person, is by their words.

READ Proverbs 12:18, 27:17 and 29:11.

What do these Proverbs say about the words of the wise?

Reflect on the words you use. Do they work to bring calm and healing? Are they even-tempered? Why or why not?

Another way to spot wisdom in a person is that their actions are considerate and thoughtful. Write out these Proverbs:

Proverbs 14:8

Proverbs 19:11

Reflect on your actions. Are they thoughtful, considerate, kind, caring, understanding, selfless, attentive and respectful? Why or why not?

Our words and our actions take on these healthy characteristics as we take steps to know and become like Jesus. As we depend on the Holy Spirit at work in us, God works to change us from the inside out. He works in us so that our words and actions become more and more like Jesus. This is living wisdom—wisdom that is active and alive in us. As you end your quiet time today, reflect on your words and actions. What is God showing you? Pray and ask Him to help you take steps toward wisdom by the power of His Holy Spirit at work in you.

Heavenly Father, I want to live wisdom through my relationship with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit at work in me. Show me Your wisdom, changing my words and actions to be more like You. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Thursday:

One of the ways to spot wisdom in a person, is to see they are fair, impartial, and justice-minded.

Write out these Proverbs:

Proverbs 21:13

Proverbs 24:24

What do these Proverbs say about being fair, impartial, and justice minded?

As you reflect on your life, are you reasonable, just, fair and unbiased? Do these characteristics apply to your view of all people, or are there some people you are less prone to be unbiased toward? Share some examples of how these words are true or not true about you:

Wisdom breeds sensible and rational decision making. Wisdom in a person shows itself in the person being fair and impartial: the person is not swayed by the crowd. Rather, they are prayerful, thoughtful and proactive. If you find yourself consistently reacting in emotional outbursts that go too far, recognize that this behavior does not demonstrate what Proverbs teaches about wisdom. Think about some recent decisions you’ve made. How did you come to those decisions? Did the process you followed demonstrate wisdom or a lack of wisdom? Why?

What about the people you surround yourself with? Are they sensible and rational in their decision making? Do you find them reacting in emotion rather than listening to understand, praying and offering thoughtful guidance? List some examples of recent encounters with those from whom you seek guidance and advice. Did their perspective demonstrate wisdom or a lack of wisdom? Why?

Ask God to grow you to be a person of consistent prayer. Ask Him to create in you a life of thoughtful and proactive decision making. Ask Him to surround you with people who exhibit wisdom and who can help you as He develops His wisdom in you.

Friday:

How do we become wise? We must know the source of wisdom. Write out **Proverbs 3:7**.

Jesus is the source of wisdom. As we live to take steps to know and become like Him, we will grow in wisdom. How have you seen this in your journey?

Study God’s Word. Participate in Bible study and daily devotions so that you learn who Jesus is and how He lived His life. Because Jesus is the source of wisdom, live with the courage to do *whatever it takes* to keep Him the very center and highest priority of your life. To live wisdom we seek to live as Jesus did by the power of the Holy Spirit at work in you. This is how we become wise.

Following Jesus leads us to:
Welcome wisdom’s companions...
Proverbs 8:12

Maintain a wise attitude...
Proverbs 11:2

Surround ourselves with wise people...
Proverbs 13:20

Listen and learn...
Proverbs 13:20

As we end this series, look over your message notes as well as the devotions. Spend time in reflection. What have you learned? Are there any patterns you recognize that you know you need to address? How will this manifest itself in your life?

Pray for wisdom to grow in you. Take steps to know and become like Jesus, understanding that this is a journey. Our next series—“Progress, Not Perfect”—will continue to illuminate and emphasize this point.



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Tuesday:

One of the ways to spot wisdom in a person is to observe that they are humble, teachable and always seeking to learn. Write out these Proverbs:

Proverbs 9:9

Proverbs 12:15

Proverbs 13:1

Proverbs 13:10

What do these Proverbs say about learning and the character of humility?

What do they share about being teachable?

Are you a person who continues to learn? Why or why not?

If you are not a person who seeks to learn, is it an issue of humility? Why or why not?

Take a minute to write some examples of new things you have learned in 2017, whether through your circumstances, relationships or personal study:

- 1)

- 2)

- 3)

Spend time in prayer. Maybe you were unable to write down any examples above. If you realize you have not been teachable or receptive to healthy correction, ask God to help you open your heart to Him and allow His Spirit to bring a new desire to learn. Maybe for you it is an issue of priority and time. Ask God to help you understand how to be a lifelong learner. Ask Him for humility and a teachable spirit.

Wednesday:

One of the ways to spot wisdom in a person is to see that they have a healthy, self-motivated work ethic and a consistent sense of perspective and purpose.

Write out this Proverb:

Proverbs 6:6-8

What makes the ant wise?

If you compare your life to the ant, what do you discover? Do you work at a steady pace, planning not only for today, but for the future as well? Why or why not?

A healthy work ethic is one sign of wisdom. As you reflect on your life, do you feel you have a healthy work ethic? Why or why not?

What about the people you surround yourself with? Are they people who encourage a healthy work ethic in you? Why or why not?

If you find yourself being pulled to work too hard or to put in too many hours without necessary space and rest, this is not healthy or sustainable. At the other extreme, if you find yourself spending too many idle hours void of purpose and direction, this too is not healthy. Circle how healthy you feel your work ethic is, with 5 being the ideal balance of doing and resting:

Idle 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Overworked

If you feel the influences in your life are leading you away from a healthy work ethic, what first step could you take to move in the other direction? Maybe you need to spend less time with friends whose behavior leads you to idleness and a lack of purpose and direction. It could be that you need to call a friend who has a balanced work life and ask them to help you identify and apply some new practices in your life. Reflect on Jesus’ life in the Gospels. How is Jesus’ work ethic one we want to emulate? Why? How do you feel God is nudging or leading you to take a step of wisdom through the devotion today? Pray and ask Him to show you your best next step to integrate His wisdom into your life in a real and healthy way by the power of His Holy Spirit at work in you.