
AMEN Bible Study Fall 2026

“Wisdom Starts with Love”

Proverbs 2:1-22
September 3, 2026

Introduction

I. ENWISENING Power of Love (v.1-10)

A. Dogpile of DESIRE Words (v.1-4)

1. “receive”
2. “treasure” (v.1)
3. “inclining your heart to” (v.2)
4. “raising your voice for” (v.3)
5. “seek” (v.4)
6. “search for” (v.4)

B. Dogpile of ATTENTION Faculties (v.1-4)

1. “Attention Economy” – your attention is fought for
 - a. Silicon Valley adage: “If a product is free, YOU are the product”
 - b. Goal of the algorithms: hold your time/attention (fear, anger, hate, humor)
2. Gospel Attention
 - a. [Mind] treasuring (v.1,4)
 - b. Ears listening (v.2)
 - c. Heart inclining (v.2)
 - d. [Voice] calling out (v.3)
 - e. [Eyes] searching (v.4)

C. Q: Is God Playing Hard to Get?

A: No, He’s actively and loudly calling out to us (1:20-21,24-25)

1. In a fallen world, wisdom is hard to get
 - a. Spiritually Counter-intuitive
 - b. Culturally Counter-intuitive
 - c. Financially Counter-intuitive
 - d. Socially Counter-intuitive
 - e. Politically Counter-intuitive
2. Wisdom Requires Multi-layered Re-Ordering

D. We BECOME What We LOVE (v.5,10)

1. “Intimacy Economy” – A.I. is aiming not just for Attention but Intimacy
2. Henry Scougal: “The worth and excellency of a soul is to be measured by the object of its love.” (*The Life of God in the Soul of Man*)

3. We Become What our Heart “lovingly beholds” (cf. Ps.115:8)
 - a. “WE shall be like Him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 Jn. 3:2)

E. God’s Love-Full Response (v.6-10)

1. He GIVES Wisdom to us (v.6)
2. He STORES UP [Future] Wisdom for us (v.7)
3. He Gives HIMSELF to us thru Wisdom (v.7b-8)
4. He Gives LIFE as it’s MEANT to be (v.9)

II. PROTECTIVE Power of LOVE (v.11-22)

A. Best Counterfeit Defense – LOVINGLY KNOW the Real (v.10)

1. Intuitively
2. Reflexively
3. Unconsciously

B. ... From PERVERSE Ways & Words (v.12-15)

1. “Perverted”
 - a. Anything not: from God, thru God, to God and His glory
 - b. Twists, diverts, undermines, mis-values truth, goodness, beauty
 - c. Uses truth/goodness/beauty to lead *away from* God
2. Perversity Surrounds Us
 - a. in the Church(?) (v.13)
 - b. in the Heart (v.14)
 - c. in Actions, Practices, Cultures (v.15)

C. ... From SEDUCTIVE Ways & Words (v.16-19)

1. “Forbidden Woman” (v.16; cf. ch.9)
 - a. Applies narrowly – sex outside of God’s design
 - b. Applies metaphorically
2. Sin can be as Seductive as it is Coercive
3. “Smooth” words (v.16; cf. 23:31-32)
4. Makes Us “forget” Our First Love/Belonging (v.17)
 - a. Belonging as Husband, Father (v.17a)
 - b. Belonging in Covenant with God (v.17b)
5. Sells “Death” as if it were “Life” (v.18-19)
 - a. “sinks down” – like quicksand

Conclusion – God’s Love-Gift thru Wisdom (v.20-22)

A. We Are Kept in the Lane of Goodness (v.20)

B. We Abide in God’s Promise, Presence & Blessing (v.21; cf. John 15:1-11)

AMEN Action Steps

“Wisdom Starts with Love”

Proverbs 2:1-22

HEAR the Word

“Open my eyes, that I might behold wondrous things out of your law.”

-Psalm 119:18

1. In verses 1-4, we see a “dogpile” of words to speak of the required desire for wisdom, as well as a “dogpile” of words to describe our required attention to wisdom. Why do you think Solomon feel the need to heap up these words in this way?
2. Ponder: how do “perverted speech” (v.12) and “smooth words” (v.16) surround you and your loved ones every single day? Be as concrete and specific as you can.

PRACTICE the Word

“...Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on a rock”

-Matthew 7:24

1. Be honest with yourself: to what extent do you desire Gospel wisdom for ordinary living more than anything in this world? And to the extent your heart doesn't desire it that much, humbly but honestly ask yourself, why doesn't it? What is it about Jesus and His ways that your heart doesn't find very compelling? What does it find more compelling?
2. If it's true that “The worth and excellency of a soul is to be measured by the object of its love,” think of someone you know who has such a noble object for his/her first love and thereby lives a noble life. Conversely, think of someone with an ignoble first love, and thereby lives such a small, ignoble life.
3. As we are introduced to the “forbidden woman” (v.16ff), what seductive forcefield do you find yourself frequently feeling “pulled” toward?

RETELL the Word

“Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you...”

-Mark 5:19

1. When you consider how you engage your time, money, relationships and ambitions, how is your life different from conventional East Memphis priorities? As you look around you, whose life bears witness of being more shaped by Gospel wisdom than East Memphis?
2. If you were to invite friends, neighbors or colleagues to church, who are the believers you want them to meet, those shaped very differently, by Gospel desires and priorities?