

Steve Whitacre

# SESSION 1 | The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom

**TEXT:** *Proverbs 1:1-7*

## I. WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF PROVERBS?

- "Solomon, the son of David, King of Israel"
- 10:1 – "Proverbs of Solomon"
- 22:17, 24:23 – "sayings of the wise"
- 25:1 – "sayings of Solomon, copied by the men of Hezekiah"
- 30:1 – Agur, son of Jakeh
- 31:1 – King Lemuel (the words that his mother taught him)

## II. WHAT ARE PROVERBS?

- **1–9 Instruction**
  - Deut. 6:6–7, "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."
- **10–31 Sayings**
  - Pithy truisms that require wisdom and lead to wisdom.
  - Parallelism
  - Vivid imagery
  - Figures of speech

## III. HOW DO WE READ PROVERBS?

### 1. Read Proverbs in the fear of the Lord

- Proverbs lead to the fear of the Lord. Walking wisely in the fear of the Lord leads to life.

## GET WISDOM! DISCERNMENT FOR DAILY LIFE FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

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“[The fear of the LORD is] that affectionate reverence, by which the child of God bends himself humbly and carefully to his Father’s law. His wrath is so bitter and his love so sweet; that hence springs an earnest desire to please him, and—because of the danger of coming short from his own weakness and temptations—a holy watchfulness and fear, ‘that he might not sin against him.’” Charles Bridges, *A Commentary on Proverbs*, 4–5.

“[The fear of the Lord is] that indefinable mixture of reverence, fear, pleasure, joy, and awe which fills our hearts when we realize who God is and what He has done for us.” Sinclair Ferguson, in Jerry Bridges, *The Joy of Fearing God*, 27.

“What God is inspires awe; what God has done for his people commands affection.” William Arnot, *Studies in Proverbs*, 19.

### 2. Read Proverbs to gain wisdom

“Two inseparable but distinct characteristics of wisdom are to be seen: it is both the gift of God and a responsible task for us.” Graeme Goldsworthy, *The Gospel and Wisdom*, 409.

“Wisdom, then, is a characteristic of man in relation to God. He who is restored to friendship with God is, in one important sense of the word, the wise man.” Graeme Goldsworthy, *The Goldsworthy Trilogy*, 348.

### 3. Read Proverbs as proverbs (keep in mind the genre)

### 4. Read Proverbs looking for Christ

- How does this proverb reveal the sinful condition Jesus came to save us from?
- How does this proverb reveal the virtuous life that is possible only by the redeeming work of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit?
- How is Jesus the only one who can perfectly walk out this wisdom?
- How does this Proverb lead us to Jesus Christ as the wisdom of God?

“To think Christianly with a sanctified mind is to think of reality in terms of the truth that is revealed in Christ. A sinful mind-set is one which views reality apart from what God has revealed in Christ... The Christian mind-set comes about through the gospel, and so we must come to think of Christian wisdom as a conforming of the mind to the gospel... Growing as a Christian really means learning to apply the fact of the gospel to every aspect of our thinking and doing.” Graeme Goldsworthy, *The Goldsworthy Trilogy*, 340–41.

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“The person and work of Jesus provide us with the only reliable basis for understanding ourselves, our experience and the world.” Graeme Goldsworthy, *The Goldsworthy Trilogy*, 343.

### APRIL CHALLENGE

- **READ** Proverbs in April
- **MEMORIZE** Proverbs 1:1-7 this week