



Listen, Learn, and Live by God's Wisdom

Proverbs 2

Listening and learning is the key to understanding how to live for the Lord (1-5).

- *Gaining godly wisdom demands the pursuit of knowing God and his Word (1-4).*
- *For those who pursue knowing God and his Word, they will receive understanding and knowledge to live for the Lord (5).*

Solomon started chapter 2 by calling his son to listen and to learn. God's wisdom comes through his Word. This was not new. This was the very counsel of Solomon's own father, David. In Psalm 119:9, David wrote: "How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word." God's Word – his laws, promises, testimonies, statutes, commands, precepts, and judgments – were life to David, and Solomon knew this to be true as well. He passed on this wisdom to the next generation, calling his son to pursue knowing God and his Word. The advice was simple and important: (1) Receive his words; (2) treasure up his commandments; (3) make your ear attentive; (4) incline your heart to understand; (5) call out for insight; (6) raise your voice for understanding; (7) seek it like silver; and (8) search for it like treasure. In other words, gaining godly wisdom demands the pursuit of knowing God and his Word. And if this is pursued, then the result will be understanding the fear of the Lord (a proper understanding and response in relationship to God) and finding the knowledge of God, which is wisdom! This truth was proclaimed by our Lord in Matthew 7:7-11 when he said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you...." Today, this principle is still true for people of faith. Listening and learning is the key – the most basic and foundational thing – to understanding how to live for the Lord.

1. Go through verses 1-4 again. Discuss each way that Solomon called his son to pursue the knowledge of God and his Word. Why did God use so many different ways to describe the pursuit of godly wisdom? Which way stands out to you most right now in your life? Why? When you consider the picture of this call, are you truly pursuing God's wisdom in his Word?
2. Study verse 5. It begins with "then." What does that mean in relation to the verses that came before? What is the "then" in verse 5? Do you have a testimony of how this has happened in your life as you've pursued knowing God and his Word. Share, and encourage one another.

God's wisdom is a gift from the Lord for the protection of his people (6-19).

- *The Lord is the one who gives wisdom, knowledge, and understanding (6).*
- *Godly wisdom is the armor that protects from evil (7-19).*

There is only one source for eternal, unchanging wisdom, and that is the Word of God. The Lord himself is the one who gives wisdom, and he is the one whose words provide knowledge and understanding for life. So while the pursuit of godly wisdom is demanded and needed, the fruit of that pursuit is by the grace of God! His wisdom is given to those who ask, seek, and knock. The Lord is the one who gives wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and what's important to understand is that godly wisdom is the armor that protects from evil men and seductive women in this world. Solomon paints the picture of God's wisdom, knowledge, and understanding as the very armor of God that protects his people. It is a "shield to those who walk in integrity" (Prov. 2:7). It "guards the paths of justice, watching over the way of his saints" (Prov. 2:8). It brings understanding of every good path to walk in life (Prov. 2:9), and godly discretion and understanding watches over and



guards you in life (Prov. 2:11). Godly wisdom delivers you from the way of evil, including evil men, who walk in darkness and rejoice in perverseness (Prov. 2:12-15) and seductive women, who talk smoothly and entice the foolish to the path of death (Prov. 2:16-19). What a gift of protection we've been given through the gift of God's Word!

1. Study verse 6. What's significant about the fact that "the Lord gives wisdom." What does this mean for how wisdom is obtained? How does it impact how you seek to get it? The second part of this verse states that "from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." What does that mean about the true source of wisdom? How does this impact how you get it?
2. There's so much in these verses! Go through the list of the ways that godly wisdom protects us. Pick at least one of these ways of protection that you've experienced, and share your experience of God's protection of your life through his wisdom in your life.
3. Do you know someone who is being deceived and following evil men or seductive women? How could you share this chapter with them this week to encourage them to turn to God? Discuss, and pray for the individuals that you've identified who need God's intervention.

By grace, walk in the way of good and righteousness, which always leads to blessing (20-22).

Solomon ended chapter 2 with a call to his son. The assumption was that because of the obvious benefit of godly wisdom, his son would walk in the way of the good and keep to the paths of righteousness. Solomon understood the Old Covenant. The blessings and curses under the Old Testament were clear (Deut. 28): Covenant faithfulness would bring the blessing of the Lord (life in the Promised Land), but covenant unfaithfulness would bring the curse of the Lord (cut off from the Promised Land). At this point, it's critical to look forward to the New Covenant. Why? Because of one simple fact: Solomon's sons didn't follow his advice, and Solomon himself didn't even follow it! Solomon fell for the smooth talk of foreign women, who worshiped pagan idols. Eventually, these women pulled Solomon away from faithfulness to the Lord and into pagan idol worship (1 Kings 11:4-6). His son led in the division of the kingdom, and he abandoned the way of the Lord (2 Chronicles 12:1). So if the wisest man who ever walked the face of the earth failed to keep his own advice, what hope do we have of accomplishing it by our strength and effort? The answer is "no hope" – that is, at least apart from the grace of God. This is why the New Covenant of grace is so good! We have something that Solomon and Rehoboam didn't have. We have the finished work of Christ and the gift of the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives as believers. We have the ability – by the Lord's strength and presence – to obey. These words are true today, but not by works of the flesh to keep the law but by the work of the Spirit in us to transform our hearts and minds by the law. So by faith, we pursue the ifs in verses 1-5. By faith, we experience God's faithfulness in the thens in verses 6-19. And by faith, we walk in the way of good and keep to the paths of righteousness, relying on God's grace and his power alone to do what only he can do in the lives of those who walk by faith.

1. Look up the verses referenced above to confirm the reality of Solomon and his son's lives. How does this remind us of our desperate need for God's grace?
2. Are you pursuing knowing God and his word by the flesh or by faith? What does that mean? What's the difference? How do we pursue things in the flesh (which is a part of life now) through faith? Use Scripture to answer these questions.
3. Have you received God's grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ? This is the start and the finish of true godly wisdom, so if not, turn to Jesus today!