

Listen. Keep. Find.
Proverbs 8

God's true and priceless wisdom is proclaimed for all to hear (1-11).

In contrast to the worthless person or wicked man, God is the complete opposite of deception, exploitation, wickedness, and division. God's wisdom isn't hiding in the alley. It's not being masked behind a wink and a point of the finger. His wisdom is seen and heard in creation and in the reality of life in this world everyday. It stands on the crossroads and cries out at the city gates. The declaration of God through his creation is clear: God is trustworthy and true! God's Word has no deception (6-8), and rather than exploitation, God's Word leads to truth and reward (9-11). There is no wickedness in God's Word: There's only truth, which does reveal the wickedness of sin. God's Word is the reflection of God himself: Righteous and true! For all who follow and listen to God's Word, it is direction that is straight and right. and it is a reward of greater value than the riches this world has to offer. Just open your eyes and ears to see and to hear, God's wisdom is shouting out the truth that the sinful soul needs to live!

1. Take time to review the first half of Proverbs 6. Discuss the contrasts that you see between the evil man in Proverbs 6 and God's wisdom in Proverbs 8.
2. How is God's wisdom crying out through creation and in the reality of everyday life?
3. Why can't people clearly see God's wisdom in creation? What keeps them from hearing and understanding it? Use the New Testament to answer these questions.
4. What is your role as the church in proclaiming God's wisdom for all to hear?

God's wisdom is life and reward to those who hate evil and love the Lord (12-21).

Again, in contrast to wickedness, wisdom brings strength and reward. God's wisdom is what brings discretion, insight, and prudence into this world. His wisdom is the counsel and strength to those who receive it (12-14). The Lord has the ability to give it to rulers in order to bring justice through their authority (15-16), and the Lord's wisdom in Christ is what ultimately brings a reward and inheritance to which nothing in the world can compare (18-21). To align our hearts with God's wisdom in his Word, the call in these verses is simple: Hate evil (13) and love the Lord (17)! While sin deceives to steal and destroy, God brings truth to give life and reward! What a gracious Father we have who reminds us of these important truths and calls us to love him as he loves us!

1. Go through these verses and write down all the things that God's wisdom brings into life. Discuss these things and why they are important to have in our lives.
2. Go through these verses and identify the references to the reward of God's wisdom. What kind of reward is more valuable than the most valuable things in this world? What is an inheritance? How is that connected to the reward of God's wisdom?
3. Do you hate evil? Be honest with yourself. Do you truly hate the things that God hates? Hate doesn't mean that you act sinfully against what you hate. It simply means that you haven't compromised your heart by condoning or discounting the things that God hates.
4. Do you love God? How does having a heart aligned to what God hates and what he loves relate to assessing your love for the Lord?



God's wisdom is seen in creation and rejoices in God's design for creation (22-31).

God's wisdom is seen in creation! Just look at the complexities and mysteries of the expanse of the universe or the amazing and miraculous work of millions of cells functioning together to bring sight through the human eye, and the eyes of faith can clearly see the wisdom of God and the insanity of the theory of evolution. From the foundation of the world to the creation of all that exists in heaven and earth, God's wisdom was at work. Some point to these verses as an early reference to Christ, who is the Word of God who was with God in the beginning (John 1:1). Jesus is the one through whom and for whom all things were created (Colossians 1:15-20). These things are certainly true and no doubt a part of the truth of these verses in Proverbs 8; however, the emphasis in these verses is simply a powerful reminder that creation itself testifies to the wisdom of the Creator. Not only that, but wisdom rejoices in God's design for creation and delights in the children of man created in the image of God! May we be wise, seeing God's wisdom in his creation and rejoicing not in sin in this world but in God's perfect design for his creation!

1. How do you see the wisdom of God in creation?
2. Do you rejoice in God's design for creation? That means you hate sin and what it's done to the world, and you truly long for and love God's design for creation (His design for gender. His design for work. His design for marriage. Etc.).

Live wisely by listening to God's Word, keeping his ways, and seeking him (32-36).

The final instruction in Proverbs 8 is good counsel for the heart of faith. Listening to the Lord's Word requires hearing instruction and not forsaking it. What a gift it is to have God's wisdom given to us through his Word. It requires listening. The Lord himself is the one – the only one – who can speak his truth into the sinful, deceived human heart. He's the only one who can open the blinded eyes and the closed mind of a wicked soul. When he speaks, listen! What he says, do not forsake! Listening that leads to living by faith is the listening to God's Word that he desires. It's not a moment in time, but it's a heart that's watching and waiting for the Lord at all times (33-34). This naturally leads to keeping the Lord's ways, and there's blessing from the Lord that comes to those who keep his Word in the way that they live their lives for him (32). God's grace – his favor – comes to those who find him (35), and in his wisdom and mercy, God reminds us that death is the only reward for those who don't find him – those who hate him. Lord, in your grace, give us ears to hear and hands and feet that keep your precious wisdom that is life and reward to all who find you!

1. Listening, keeping, and seeking are all wonder exhortations for the life of a believer. Use the BlueLetterBible app to do word studies for these words in verses 32-36. Discuss.
2. How's your listening? How can your small group encourage one another weekly in living daily watching and waiting for the Lord, listening to his Word?
3. How's your keeping? How can your small group bring accountability into one another's lives that helps us keep the Word as your life for the Lord each day?
4. How's your seeking? How can your small group come alongside each other to seek the Lord in all that need and all that we do as we live by faith in him?
5. Pray for God's grace to live wisely by listening, keeping, and seeking him every day!