

WISDOM OF GOD'S PEOPLE

PROVERBS 1; 3-4



KEY PASSAGE: Proverbs 3:7

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What does God know? God knows everything about the past, present, and future.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Solomon's proverbs encourage God's people to trust in the Lord. Jesus trusted in God His Father throughout His life on earth, all the way to His death on the cross for our sins. He rose again and continues to lead us to love and trust God the Father.

STORY POINT: We gain wisdom when we fear God and trust in Him.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

God's gift of wisdom to King Solomon did not end with Solomon; he shared this wisdom through his proverbs. Solomon wrote in Proverbs 1:2 that these words were for learning wisdom and discipline, understanding insightful sayings, receiving instruction, and teaching the inexperienced. Through all the insight he gained as the wisest man on earth, he came back to this truth: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7).

What does it mean to fear the Lord? How can we know that we have true wisdom?

Fearing the Lord means honoring Him as holy and revering Him as God alone. Solomon recognized the folly of a life lived in his own strength and wisdom. He knew that pursuing the Lord through genuine trust and obedience is the only way to live a life that matters. He beckoned readers to trust in the Lord with all their heart and not depend on their own understanding. The proverbs reveal to us that wisdom is not a mere intellectual exercise. Wisdom is a Person, Jesus, and by trusting in Him we find salvation.

Many proverbs offer practical guidance for interacting with the world: avoiding peer pressure, pursuing the path of peace, and treating others fairly. However, all of the practical guidance is grounded in following God's wisdom above any earthly knowledge. Solomon wrote of the favor God's people experience when they cling to His ways above all else.

Consider your relationship to godly wisdom. Reflect on the seasons of life that have led you closest to the Lord and in obedience to Him. Remember God's generosity and kindness toward His followers: "Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God—who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly—and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).

Invite kids to see the beauty of pursuing God's ways and trusting Him, both for the promise of His presence and the wisdom He provides in our everyday lives. Life everlasting begins when we come to faith in Him!



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Wise Words" activity page



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Wisdom of God's People" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 12, Session 5" Questions from Kids video

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "Fear the LORD (Proverbs 3:7)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ beanbags, 2 or 3



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ paper bags, 1 per food item
- ☐ various food items such as apple slices, cabbage, deli ham, mushrooms, bread, mustard, and strawberry jam
- ☐ blindfolds, 3

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ 3-by-5-inch cardstock pieces, 1 per kid
- ☐ 4–5 inch long yarn pieces, 1 per kid
- ☐ hole punch
- ☐ pony beads
- ☐ stickers

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Is there a place in your neighborhood, school, or town that you know how to get to without directions? Tell me about it.”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Wise Words” activity page.

SAY “Today, we’ll learn how **WE GAIN WISDOM WHEN WE FEAR GOD AND TRUST IN HIM.**”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: HEEL TO TOE

Invite the kids to choose a partner and line up together. Explain that each pair will attempt to cross from one side of the room to the other. But there is a catch! Tell kids to line up with one partner’s toes touching the other partner’s heels. Suggest the partners in the back place their hands on their partner’s shoulder. The kids must cross the room while remaining together, heel to toe. Remind the kids in the back that they can only move as fast as their partner. If at any time the two partners become separated, they must start over. Repeat, but allow kids to switch partners.

SAY “It took patience and keeping your eyes on your partner’s feet to be successful at this game. A lot of times we try to do things our way and according to our time frame. But today, we will learn how Solomon taught that **WE GAIN WISDOM WHEN WE FEAR GOD AND TRUST IN HIM.** This means we love God, keep our eyes on Him, and trust that His way is best.”

☐ OPTION 2: LEAN ON ME



Invite kids to find a space on a wall. Direct kids to sit down with their legs out in front of them. Challenge kids to lean against the wall while trying to stand up without using their hands to push off the ground. Then pair kids up with a partner. Guide pairs to sit down back to back and link arms. Challenge pairs to stand up while leaning on their partner.

Next, invite kids to spread out around the room. Lead kids to sit down with their arms and legs straight out in front of them. Without using any object or their hands, challenge kids to stand up. Ask kids which was easier.

SAY “It was easier to stand up when you had something to lean on, wasn’t it? In a similar way, God wants us to lean on Him. He doesn’t want us to try to get through life on our own or in our own strength. God has all wisdom, and He wants to help us walk in ways that are right. God wants to lead us to life in Him through faith in Jesus. Let’s learn more about how we can gain wisdom.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and I am glad to see you. Today, our story will be from the book of Proverbs. Is Proverbs in the Old Testament or New Testament? [Allow responses.] Yes, it’s in the Old Testament. If you have a Bible with you, will you hold it up? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] King Solomon wrote many of these proverbs to help us know more of God’s wisdom.

As we hear our story, we will see that **WE GAIN WISDOM WHEN WE FEAR GOD AND TRUST IN HIM.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s take a moment to ask the Lord to give us hearts and minds that desire to gain wisdom: ‘God, thank You for helping us understand that all wisdom comes from You. Help us trust in You and follow Your commands. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “Today, we’ll review our big picture question one last time: **What does God know?** What is the answer? [Allow responses.] **God knows everything about the past, present, and future.**

Where did Solomon get his wisdom? [Allow responses.] Yes, Solomon received his wisdom from God. Solomon wanted others to know the wisdom of God too. So, Solomon wrote many proverbs to help others learn that all wisdom comes from God. Solomon wrote that if we want to have wisdom, we have to first know God. The book of Proverbs encourages us to trust in God, who knows everything! ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Solomon was the wisest earthly king to ever live. His wisdom led him to build a temple for God to dwell in and for the people to worship God. Many heard how wise Solomon was, leading the queen of Sheba to visit him and discover that Solomon’s kingdom was blessed by God. We also learned that Solomon wrote the book of Ecclesiastes. Today, we will learn about another book Solomon and other wise people wrote: Proverbs. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Proverbs 1:1-7; 3:1-12; 4:10-19. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Wisdom of God’s People.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

WISDOM OF GOD’S PEOPLE

“King Solomon wrote many proverbs. Proverbs are short sayings that give wisdom and help people live in ways that are right and good. By following these proverbs, people can gain knowledge and wisdom and receive guidance for life.

The book of Proverbs is filled with many of King Solomon’s wise sayings. King Solomon taught people to fear the Lord and trust in Him. He said fearing God was the beginning of knowledge. He also wrote that it is foolish to hate wisdom and discipline.

Solomon said it is wise to keep God’s commandments, for they will bring a long, full life. He taught about the importance of being loyal and faithful, and how this will give you a good reputation with God and people.

Another proverb Solomon wrote was, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not depend on your own understanding.” Solomon said you should look to God in everything you do, and He will guide you. “Don’t think of yourself as wise,” Solomon wrote. “Instead fear the LORD and turn away from evil.”

Solomon also said, “Honor the LORD with everything you own and with the first produce of your entire harvest; then you will experience great blessing.”

Some of Solomon’s proverbs were warnings, such as “Do not hate the LORD’s instruction, and do not hate His discipline. The LORD disciplines the one He loves, just as a father disciplines the son he loves.”

Solomon’s proverbs show there are two ways to live: with God’s wisdom or without God’s wisdom. He wrote, “I am teaching you the way of wisdom; hold on to God’s commands and don’t let go for they are your life. Don’t walk in the path of the wicked. Turn away from it for the wicked love violence, and their path is dark. But stay on the path of the righteous where light always shines brighter and brighter.”

Christ Connection: Solomon’s proverbs encourage God’s people to trust in the Lord. Jesus trusted in God His Father throughout His life on earth, all the way to His death on the cross for our sins. He rose again and continues to lead us to love and trust God the Father. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Look up: Invite kids to turn away and look up when you teach about turning away from evil. Remind kids that we must turn from sin and turn toward Jesus to receive forgiveness.

Dim the lights: Dim the lights when you tell how the wicked walk on dark paths.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ King Solomon wrote proverbs to help people gain wisdom to live their lives for the Lord. Solomon taught that we are to fear the Lord, because the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. What does it mean to fear the Lord? **[Allow responses.]** We don’t fear God like we might fear spiders, heights, or the dark. Fearing God means we respect Him and recognize that His ways are best. Solomon encouraged God’s people to be amazed by Him! Fearing God also means following God’s commandments. God’s ways lead us to eternal life.

Who did Solomon say we should trust with all our heart? **[Allow responses.]** Solomon instructed people to trust God with all their heart, being careful not to trust in our own understanding. Because we are sinful, we don’t know best. We mess up, hurt people, and make bad choices. God sent His Son, Jesus, to save us from our sin. When we trust in Jesus with all our hearts, we make the choice to follow His ways—not our own.

What two paths did Solomon write about? **[Allow responses.]** There are only two paths we can choose to follow: the path of the wicked or the path of the righteous. Those who love God and trust in Jesus walk on the path of the righteous. To be righteous means we have been made right with God because Jesus took away our sin.

Jesus trusted in God His Father throughout His life on earth, all the way to His death on the cross for our sins. He rose again and continues to lead us to love and trust God the Father. When we follow Jesus, we walk on the path of the righteous. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ Do you believe that you need God because you are sinful and can’t save yourself? The good news of the gospel tells us that God made the way for you to be saved from your sin. In His wisdom, God sent Jesus to pay for your sin on the cross. When you trust in Jesus, you will be saved! ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 12, Session 5” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why does God tell us to fear Him?
2. How does fearing God help us see our need for Jesus?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Orvil Reid was a missionary to the people of Mexico for 38 years. When Orvil retired at 68 years old, he made a goal to jog 550 miles from Atlanta, Georgia, to Richmond, Virginia. Orvil said, ‘I would crawl from New York City to Los Angeles on my knees, if I knew one person would come to know Christ.’ During his run, Orvil led services to share the gospel and gave demonstrations of his



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

physical strength. More than 340 people became followers of Jesus. He also ran to raise money for world hunger relief. ”

Discuss how God desires for every Christian to run the race of life with endurance and follow His purpose for their lives. Tell kids that many Christians may be led to go to another country to share Jesus with the world, but every believer is commanded to share the gospel wherever they go. Pray for missionaries serving in your church or for missionaries serving around the world. Ask God to give them wisdom to live lives worthy of the gospel.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Proverbs 3:7 together.

SAY “ Solomon wrote that we should fear God and turn from evil. When we turn from our sin and trust in Jesus, we are fearing God rightly. ”

Write each word or phrase of the key passage on a sheet of paper, taping each paper to a spot on the floor. Instruct kids to take turns tossing a beanbag onto the papers, following the correct order of the key passage. When the beanbag lands on the paper, encourage them to shout that word or phrase.

Lead kids to sing “Fear the LORD (Proverbs 3:7).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ God, thank You for leading us in Your wisdom and truth. Guide us on the path of righteousness through faith in Jesus. Help us share the gospel with others so they can find life in You. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles, and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Proverbs. Guide kids to flip through the book of Proverbs, pointing out how there are 31 chapters. Tell kids that they could read one chapter a day during a month that has 31 days.

Consider pointing out Jerusalem (H5) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Proverbs 3:5-6, or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “Trusting in God is not something we only do when we go to church, read our Bible, or pray. God wants us to trust Him with all our hearts and wherever we go. When we understand that we need God for everything and depend on Him, He guides us on good paths. God wants to help us, and He wants us to know Him more.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “Why should we not trust and follow our heart?”

Point out that Solomon tells us to trust in the Lord rather than in our own understanding. Share with kids that Scripture describes our hearts as deceitful and wicked because we have been affected by sin (Jeremiah 17:9). Remind kids that we should follow God’s plans above ours because He cares for us and He knows everything.

SAY “Why do you think Solomon said we should not hate God’s discipline?”

Tell kids that like a loving parent who wants to help their kid turn away from wrong, God disciplines us to help us turn from sin. Discuss how God allows hard things into our lives to help us depend on Him and trust Him more. Even Jesus knew discipline, and Jesus never sinned! The Bible tells us that God loves His Son, Jesus. But Jesus suffered hardships, and as He did, Jesus continued to obey God and trust in Him.

SAY “Do you feel like there is an area in your life where you need God to help you and give you wisdom? What?”

Answers will vary. Remind kids that every person needs wisdom in every area of his or her life. No one has all the answers, knows exactly what to do, or can do everything perfectly. Tell kids that the Bible tells us that we can ask God for wisdom, and when we do, He delights to give us His wisdom (James 1:5). Share how following Jesus and trusting in Him is how we truly become wise.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: DO YOU KNOW?



Invite three kids to be volunteers in a smelling test. Blindfold the kids, and explain that today they will be using their nose to determine certain foods. Place foods such as apple slices, cabbage, deli ham, mushrooms, bread, mustard, and strawberry jam in individual paper bags. Encourage them to guess what each food is. After guessing, reveal the mystery foods.

SAY “ Which food was the hardest to guess? [Allow responses.] Solomon reminds us not to trust our own wisdom, but to turn to God because **God knows everything about the past, present, and future. WE GAIN WISDOM WHEN WE FEAR GOD AND TRUST IN HIM.** ”

☐ OPTION 2: PROVERBS BOOKMARK

Provide each kid with a cardstock bookmark and markers. Invite kids to use their Bible to write the verse from Proverbs 3:5 on their bookmark. Distribute stickers for kids to place on their bookmark. Then hole punch the top of each kid's bookmark.

Provide kids with a 4–5 inch long piece of yarn and pony beads. Assist kids with tying one end of the yarn around the hole of the bookmark. Then direct kids to string the beads on the yarn. Assist kids in knotting the end of the yarn.

SAY “ Today, we learned that Solomon wrote how we should trust in the Lord with all our heart and not depend on our own understanding. When we trust in Jesus, we become wise. I encourage you to think about whether or not you have trusted in Jesus. If you have trusted in Jesus, think about how you might be trying to follow your own ways instead of His. Remember, God will give us wisdom to follow Jesus if we ask Him. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.