

# WISDOM SAVES US FROM OURSELVES

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING IN WISDOM / SERIES: PROVERBS

## BIG TRUTH: WISDOM SAVES US FROM OURSELVES

Proverbs 2:7; 4:23-27; 5:21-23; 12:15; 21:2; 28:14; Psalm 52

## BIBLE VERSE: PROVERBS 28:26

*“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.”*

## BIG IDEAS

- We are prone to self-destruction.
- Following the heart is the path to folly and destruction.
- Wisdom delivers us from ourselves by pointing us to God.

## BIBLE PASSAGE: 1 KINGS 3

## KNEEL: LIVING IN WISDOM

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

## SERIES AIMS



### Every student should know...

- What wisdom is.
- Why wisdom is worthy to be pursued.
- How to grow in wisdom.



### Every student should feel...

- Love for God who gives all wisdom.
- Satisfied and secure in the wisdom of God.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



### Every student should strive to...

- Read through the book of Proverbs one time each month.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Repent of the ways they have not pursued God and His wisdom.



### Every student should want...

- To fear the Lord and keep His commandments.
- To live their lives in pursuit of true wisdom.
- To guard their heart from all impurity.

## GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



Property of Tri-Cities Baptist Church  
171 Promise Land Dr. Gray, TN 37615

# WISDOM SAVES US FROM OURSELVES

**BIBLE VERSE: PROVERBS 28:26**

*“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.”*

---

**Human wisdom is not sufficient to lead us to everlasting life.**

*“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool...”*

- Men and women are created in the image of God, but they are not God. Our minds are finite. We do not hold all knowledge, nor do we have full and perfect understanding. We can only know and perceive partially and even then, what we know and perceive is darkened by our sin nature.
- Because of our limits, our wisdom is not perfect, nor is it complete. This means that it is insufficient to lead us to everlasting life. It cannot even lead us to lead a productive and happy life. We are all desperately in need of God to intervene on our behalf, and we are in need of His wisdom to guide us.

**Trusting in ourselves is foolishness.**

*“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool...”*

- It is folly to trust in ourselves knowing the limits we have as humans. To trust our own minds to lead us sufficiently would be foolishness. Because we can't know the future, we can't fully understand the past, and we don't have the ability to understand fully the present, trusting in our own knowledge and wisdom to lead us is unwise.
- When we choose to trust in ourselves, we are choosing the path of foolishness. We are rejecting God's wisdom and choosing instead to follow our own path. This is a reckless choice.

**Trusting God's wisdom leads to life.**

*“...but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.”*

- God's wisdom is a treasure to those who seek it. He is all-knowing and holds all understanding. He is not like man; He is not limited. His mind is not finite. He has understanding that is perfect and complete. Because of this, His wisdom is perfect.
- When we trust in God's wisdom, we are led to everlasting life. We receive joy and salvation. God's wisdom leads us to live for Him and teaches us how to obey Him daily. This leads to a life well-lived on this earth and equips us for our eternal home.

# WISDOM SAVES US FROM OURSELVES

## BIG IDEA #1: WE ARE PRONE TO SELF-DECEPTION.<sup>1</sup>

### [ THIS ]

In Jeremiah 17:9, the prophet speaks some of the most famous words spoken about the human heart when he says that it is desperately sick and deceitful above all things. These words of God spoken through the prophet Jeremiah reveal a truth about the sinful heart of every man and woman. Our hearts are sinful from birth. We are born sinners, broken by our sin nature that mars us and darkens our minds to the truth of God. Instead of choosing the truth of God, we reject Him and choose instead to follow the path of destruction set before us in this world. The deception in our hearts leads us to believe that we know more than we really do. This leads us away from God and away from a good life. Our hearts cannot be trusted. We cannot trust ourselves to understand truth in our own power and understanding without the help of God.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Read Hebrews 2:1. How does the deceptiveness of our hearts make us prone to drifting away from the truth?**

The author of Hebrews warns that if we forget the truth we have been taught, we will drift away from it. If we are not actively pursuing God, we are passively moving away from Him. Our hearts convince us that we are in a better position than we really are, and this can lead us to drift away from God's truth.

### **How is the world's focus on the individual self dangerous to our spiritual journey?**

In Proverbs 12:15 and 21:2, we see that we often think that we know a way to live, but we are mistaken. The world's celebration of self and focus on the individual self leads us to embrace our self-deception. We move away from God and live deceived lives.

### [ THIS ]

The heart cannot be trusted which means that we often deceive ourselves. When we trust more in our own thoughts and ideas rather than trusting in God's wisdom, we are deceiving ourselves. Because our hearts are wicked, we cannot truly know truth in our own power. Our sinful hearts love the things of the world, and this darkens our minds to God's truth. We live deceived lives, following the prince of this world. We falsely believe what our current cultural trends tell us instead of following God's Word and His truth. In 1 Kings 3, Solomon asked God for wisdom because he recognized that he could not rule over God's people in his own power. He did not have the knowledge to guide the Israelites well, so he asked God for wisdom. We are the same. We are prone to deceive ourselves because we are so heavily influenced by the world around us and our own deceitful hearts.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How have you noticed your own inability to make wise decisions? How have you noticed the influence of the culture on your personal decisions?**

Colossians 2:8 and Hebrews 13:9 warn us of the dangers of being drawn away by controversies, philosophies, and the world's ideologies. We are all prone to this danger and we fool ourselves if we think we aren't. It's when we think we can't be drawn away that we are most deceiving ourselves.

1. Jeremiah 17:9: *Our hearts are deceptive and sick. They are wicked and lead us astray.*

# WISDOM SAVES US FROM OURSELVES

## BIG IDEA #2: FOLLOWING THE HEART IS THE PATH TO FOLLY AND DESTRUCTION.<sup>2</sup>

### [ THIS ]

In Matthew 7:12-14, Jesus taught that the path to folly and destruction was a wide path and full of many people. We can fool ourselves into believing that we aren't on this path, but if we are following our heart and not the truth of God, we are most definitely on the wide path leading to destruction. In America, our culture teaches us that our hearts are trustworthy and that they should be the place we look for wisdom and understanding. We are told subliminally and blatantly that our hearts are our guides. The main message of our culture is to be whoever and whatever our hearts tell us to be, but this message is folly and foolishness. It leads to death and destruction because our hearts are deceptive. As Jesus taught, this path is wide, and many people walk it. The path to life is narrow and few people walk it. This is because we fall prey to the lie that our hearts can be trusted and are the places where we can find understanding and truth about ourselves and even God.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How does the idea of being true to yourself lead us to follow our hearts instead of following God's truth?**

Matthew 15:19 tells us what is in our heart is not goodness, but sinfulness. Because this is true, when we follow the idea of being true to ourselves, we are actually seeking to be true to our sin nature. This isn't following God's truth which tells us to die to ourselves. Dying to ourselves would mean putting off these things that are naturally within our hearts and putting on what is Christlike.

### [ THIS ]

When we follow our hearts, we embark upon a path of destruction. Because of the sinfulness of our hearts, this path leads us away from God. We reject Him and rebel against His truth. We choose to believe the lies of this world and follow Satan instead. This leads us to give into our flesh natures. We lie and covet. We steal from others. We have hatred in our hearts and do not love others as God has loved us. Our hearts grow hard toward the Lord and His truth as Proverbs 28:14 tells us, and this results in even more calamity and trouble for our lives. The world around us shows us what this calamity looks like. When we try to follow our hearts, seeking to find purpose and joy in ourselves, we enter into a repetitive cycle that is similar to pouring water into a bucket with holes. Our hearts are broken by sin and within them we cannot find our true selves. We only find destruction, despair, and darkness.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How does pride keep us from rejecting the idea of finding wisdom and truth within ourselves?**

Proverbs 28:26 tells us that the person who trusts in his own mind is a fool. Proverbs 3:5-7 tells us not to trust in our own understanding. To trust in ourselves is prideful foolishness. It is insisting that we know better than the God of the universe. Our pride blinds us and keeps us from submitting our lives and our wills to God's truth and His rule over us.

**How can you actively submit your own life to God daily so that you are not trusting in your heart?**

Psalm 37:4 tells us to delight ourselves in the Lord. When we turn our eyes from ourselves and place them on the Lord, we will find joy and delight in Him. When we do this, we will not seek to find ourselves in our hearts, but instead trust His truth.

2. Proverbs 28:26: Trusting in ourselves is foolishness and leads to destruction.

# WISDOM SAVES US FROM OURSELVES

## BIG IDEA #3: WISDOM DELIVERS US FROM OURSELVES BY POINTING US TO GOD.<sup>3</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Every person is in need of deliverance. The world around us is fallen and broken, but the main person we all need to be delivered from is ourselves. It is for our sin that we are condemned to die and separated from God. We are held accountable for our sin nature and not for anyone else's. God judges us on our actions and our sinfulness. Wisdom delivers us from this judgment because it turns us from ourselves and points us to God's saving grace. Our hearts have us imprisoned. We are held captive by the sin in them and the darkness that pervades them. This keeps us from knowing and seeking truth. Without the help of God, we cannot know His truth and understand Him or ourselves. Wisdom that is from God leads us away from ourselves and to Him.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Why do we have to know God in order to know ourselves? How does our pride stand in the way of this?**

Philippians 2:3-4 tells us to think of others as more important than we are. This is opposite of finding ourselves by looking inward. When we look to God for truth, we will love as He loves. Mark 7:20-23 and Ephesians 4:31-32 speaks of what is inside of us corrupting us. We can't really know who we are created to be and who we are in Christ if we are looking within ourselves to find truth and a knowledge of who we are.

### [ THIS ]

When we are set free from looking inward to find truth, we are actually set free from the sin that binds us. Wisdom delivers us from these chains and leads us to God because it is only by knowing God and being known by Him that we are truly free and alive. When we are no longer looking inward to find out who we are and how we should live, we will look outward, and wisdom will lead us to look to God who is the Creator of life. Proverbs 5:21-23 tells us that our wickedness ensnares us. We are all held fast by the cords of our sin. We are all in need of salvation. Wisdom leads us to God, and it is there that we are delivered from the power that sin has over us. When we have saving faith in Jesus, sin's power no longer reigns over us. It can be easy to think that the sin we need saving from is outside of us, but in truth, we need saving from ourselves. We are our greatest problem. Wisdom shows us this and leads us away from ourselves and to our Rescuer and Savior.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Read Psalm 52. How can you see the contrast of God's steadfast love and man's sinfulness in your own life? In the lives of people around you?**

We are sinful by nature. We do not love the things of God. We choose to follow our own path and this leads us away from God. God is holy and righteous. He chooses to love us with an eternal love. When we choose to act in ways that are contrary to His Word, we show that we are following our sinful nature over His Word. God remains faithful and loving to those who are His.

**How has your faith in God delivered you from a life of futility?**

When we follow the path of the world, we are living a life of futility, or pointlessness. To do things in futility is to waste our lives. God has called us to greater things. It is foolishness and folly to follow after our sinful hearts and waste our lives. Proverbs 1:7 and 10:14 show us that our natural selves chase after folly. Psalm 85:8 also shows us that the way of the world is foolishness. God delivers us from this life.

3. Proverbs 28:14: *When we choose not to trust ourselves, we will trust God, and this leads us to eternal life.*