

## Proverbs - Chapter 8

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*"Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. There is no fool so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom." Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)*

In Chapter 7, Solomon used the example of a wayward young man who was seduced into sin because he did not use wisdom to make good choices, just wandering about with no direction or moral compass in his life.

In this chapter, the tone really shifts back to having wisdom and using it in our daily lives. The call of wisdom to us is contrasted with the call of the woman from the previous chapter. The young man who committed sin with this woman should have listened to the call of wisdom instead of the call of sin.

Wisdom, in this chapter, is portrayed as someone who guides us (v.1-v.13) and helps us to succeed (v.14-v.21).

We will see that wisdom was present at creation and worked with the Creator, God (v.22-v.31). This is actually a beautiful picture of following Christ being the same as following after Godly wisdom.

### **READ [v.1 – v.11](#)**

The will of God for our lives and for our salvation is revealed to us constantly. Whether or not we choose to follow these revelations and guides is up to us.

Solomon represents the will of God in our lives as being something that should be easily known and understood. In short, he is saying that there is no excuse for our ignorance of God's will, nor for the errors we make in failing to follow God's will for our lives.

The same would hold true for someone who fails to believe in God – there really is no excuse for this position. God has revealed Himself to man in the form of His Son, Jesus Christ.

*Read Story of Stephen Hawking*

There are a couple reasons for Solomon making these statements.

\* The things that are revealed to us belong to us and to our children.

**Deuteronomy 29:29 “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”**

\* Even creation bears out the fact that God is real.

**Psalm 19:1 “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork.”**

\* There is adequate information about God’s laws and the direction He expects us to follow that is available to all people.

In Luke 16, we find the story of the rich man and Lazarus. When the rich man lifted up his eyes in hell and was in torment, he was immediately concerned about his family, as well as himself. When he realized that Lazarus could not come to him to cool his tongue, his attention immediately turned to his family.

**Luke 16:27 – 31 “Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him (Lazarus) to my father’s house. For I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”**

In essence, the rich man was being told that there was enough reason for his family to repent just based on what Moses and the prophets had written. If they were not listening to them now, even someone coming back from the dead would not be enough to convince them of the wisdom that should have already been apparent to them.

I believe a large reason for this today is the hardness of people’s hearts. We see and hear, but refuse to believe. There will come a day when people standing before God’s Judgment will have no excuse as to why they did not make a decision to follow Christ.

The precepts of knowledge and wisdom can be easily known for the following reasons:

\* Knowledge and wisdom are proclaimed aloud. Wisdom “puts forth her voice” as one who is earnest and desires to be heard (v. 1)

**Isaiah 58:1 “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”**

**John 7:37 “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.”**

The curses and blessings on Israel were read to the people by the Levites (the priests) in a loud voice.

**Deuteronomy 27:14-15 “And the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice, cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, and abomination unto the Lord...”**

\* Knowledge and wisdom are proclaimed from high places (v.2)

The Ten Commandments were given from atop Mount Sinai. Christ gave one of His most famous sermons that we have come to know as the Sermon on the Mount.

Most importantly, when we turn away from divine revelation that is given from Heaven to help us have wisdom and understand right from wrong and make good choices, we make serious errors in our lives.

**Hebrews 12:25 “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven.”**

In the previous chapter, the adulterous woman spoke to the young man in what she thought was in secret. Wisdom speaks openly to us – it never tries to hide itself.

\* Knowledge and wisdom are proclaimed in public.

Jesus taught us this when He spoke to the people about the precepts of God. He never tried to hide wisdom and knowledge about God from the people. He spoke in temples, in synagogues, on the mountaintops, and by the seaside.

**John 18:20 "Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world. I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing."**

Jesus did this knowing that this open display of teaching wisdom and knowledge to the people would, in the end, be the very thing that angered the religious leaders of that day so much they would look for an opportunity to crucify Him.

Then, why did He do this? It was because of His love for us and our souls.

\* Knowledge and wisdom are proclaimed where they are needed most.

They are intended to be a guide to us, and will help to lead us in the right way to serve our Lord. Just as a person uses a roadmap or a GPS to find their way, we use the knowledge and wisdom of God that we have access to in order that we may live lives that are pleasing to Almighty God. If we ignore the knowledge and wisdom that is readily made available to us, we are like someone driving around in circles, constantly missing their destination, getting lost, and too proud and stubborn to stop and ask for directions.

**Isaiah 30:21 "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."**

**Ecclesiastes 10:15 "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city."**

For that reason, knowledge and wisdom call to us to guide us in the right way (v.3). We feel the difference between right and wrong in our very beings, but it is up to us to train our free will to follow what is right, and not what is wrong.

\* Knowledge and wisdom are meant for us (v. 4)

Knowledge and wisdom speak to us. This instruction is not meant for angels, because they have no need of it. It is not meant for the devil and his angels, because they made their choice when they rebelled against God. It is not meant for the animals, although creatures of God, because they are not capable of understanding. It is not just meant for God's chosen people, the Jews. It is meant for us, who are made "...a little lower than the angels".

\* Knowledge and wisdom's purpose is to make us wise and Godly people (v.5)

We are all sinners. Hopefully, all of us have experienced God's saving grace and mercy. But knowledge and wisdom is not just for those who are "seasoned" Christians and "...walk worthy of the vocation for which they are called". It is also for the sinners, the simple-minded, the foolish – in short, for everyone.

*"Though you are ever so simple, wisdom will take you for her scholars, and not only so, but, if you will be ruled by her, will undertake to give you an understanding heart. When sinners leave their sins, and become truly religious, then the simple understand wisdom." - Matthew Henry*

Solomon goes on to say in v. 6 that the things he is teaching are already revealed to us (if we will just accept them), and they are tenets we need to incorporate into our lives. He mentions several reasons for this.

\* They are priceless (v.6)

Knowledge and wisdom are accessible to the worst sinner on the face of the earth as well as to the best Christian you've ever known – and yet, there is nothing cheap about them. They are valuable, and are things that should be treasured, held close, and protected.

\* They are perfect (v.8)

Heavenly knowledge and wisdom are perfect. Solomon says there is "...nothing froward or perverse in them." Knowledge and wisdom given to us by God will never lead us wrong. It may take us in directions we don't want to go or do not desire to go, but the way will always be right.

*Ref. Rev. Bruce Jones Witnessing*

\* They are truthful (v.7)

When a person is to testify in court, they are required to place their hand on the Bible and attest that they will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help them God. In many ways, our actions in following the Heavenly knowledge and wisdom that God gives us is a testament to the world of His truth.

Every word of God is true – there is no fallacy in them. We can depend on the fact that what He tells us in His Word is the absolute truth.

\* They are acceptable and agreeable to those who incorporate them into their lives.

Those who believe in the infallibility of the scriptures and the knowledge and wisdom they grant to us will accept these precepts readily because we want to be the people God called us to be (v.9). They make sense to us, they are right, and we don't try and find ways to get around them rather than using these precepts in our lives. We know that God's Word leads and guides us in the right ways. To attempt to live a Godly life apart from God's precepts and guidance is impossible.

In v. 10-v.11, Solomon ends this section by showing that the value of Godly knowledge and wisdom is far above all the wealth of the world.

Notice that in v. 10 he starts by encouraging the reader to "receive". Knowledge and wisdom must be received, not just heard. We must actually invite it into our lives, and be glad that we have it. In the long run, it will be more valuable to us than all the money or possessions we could ever accumulate.

I think the fact that Solomon compares the value of Godly knowledge and wisdom to silver, gold, and rubies is just as relevant today as it was when this was written. We live in a society where people are always looking for "one more dollar". Money and wealth can actually become our "god" if we're not careful. Godly knowledge and wisdom will not only help us make the right choices and not become overwhelmed with the pursuit of worldly riches, but Godly wisdom and knowledge will help us to manage the blessings God bestows on us and to be satisfied with our situation.

**Philippians 4:11-13** “Not that I speak in respect of want. For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased and I know how to abound. Every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

**READ v.12 – 21**

The more a person loves and respects God, the more they will hate evil. Love for God and love for sin cannot exist in the same place. When we harbor secret sins in our lives, it means we are tolerating evil within ourselves. We need to break away from the chains of sin and commit ourselves fully to God. Godly wisdom will help us to do just that.

Solomon states that wisdom is closely tied with prudence. Prudence means caution with regard to practical matters, good judgment, wisdom in looking ahead. What he is saying here is that wisdom looks at more than the here and now.

People today are living for today with no thought of tomorrow, death, or where they will spend eternity. Some people, such as Stephen Hawking, referenced earlier in our study, believe that there is no afterlife, no Heaven or hell, no God. That’s a dangerous way to live our lives. We must be prepared as if this would be our last day on earth.

When Christ was on earth during His ministry, He constantly pointed people to the future, to what lies ahead. When He called His disciples, He called him from their current jobs such as fishermen and tax collectors (the here and now) to what He could make of them (fishers of men in the future). This took over 3 ½ years to come to fruition, but when Peter preached in Acts 2, over 3,000 people accepted Christ.

The application of wisdom in our lives will also cause us to fear (respect) the Lord. Just as He despises evil, we should as well. He mentions items such as pride, arrogancy, evil ways, and froward mouths (people who are irritable, snappy, cross, quarrelsome, obstinate).

If we look at this short list, Solomon says these are things the Lord hates – not just frowns upon, but hates! How many times do we let ourselves get caught up in one or more of these? We don’t mean to –

it just happens. Constantly seeking God's wisdom and guidance will help us to avoid some of the traps Satan sets for us that get us involved in such things.

In v.14, Solomon states that wisdom is a counselor, understanding, and strength.

One of the many names used for Jesus was Counselor. By following Him and the wisdom that He grants to us through the Holy Spirit, we will find that the guidance (counsel) He gives to us will be true. This can help us work through difficult situations in love, understanding, peace, and unity.

Wisdom is also strength to us. It will be all to us that we need, whether we are in service or suffering. Godly wisdom will never fail to lead us in the right way.

Solomon states in v.15 – v.16 that leaders and governments operate through wisdom.

In our current day and age, I think we need more statesmen than politicians. Our leaders today cave in to public pressures and seek to make decisions on what will get them the most votes, rather than always trying to do what is wise or right.

Our currency states, "In God We Trust". Our Pledge of Allegiance states that we are "One nation under God". I fear that we no longer live out those characteristics in our nation today. May we pray for God to raise up local, state, and federal leaders that will seek their wisdom from God, and not from public opinion.

This also carries over to leaders in the church. Pastors, deacons, musicians, teachers, workers, etc. must seek God's wisdom in their positions and then adhere to it. From the messages preached, to the songs sung, to the lessons taught, all must be bathed in prayer seeking God's wisdom for the right actions at the right times. We've seen evidence of this already in the way the songs selected have matched with the messages every week.

Solomon goes on to say that those who embrace wisdom, and do it early, will not only find wisdom but will also be happy (v.17).

We should seek after Godly wisdom now, before something comes our way that we do not have the tools to handle.



The last several verse of this section once again speak to the value of Godly knowledge and wisdom, but goes on to say that it "...leads in the way of righteousness..." and also allows us to "...inherit substance."

This is a beautiful account of how wisdom, although prudent, not only helps us now but also allows us a substantial inheritance. Wisdom now leads and guides us daily, if we will allow it, in the ways that God wants us to walk. At the end of that journey, however, lie treasures and an inheritance for us.

Jesus said that he was going away to prepare us a mansion. I believe that and am looking forward to that day when I get to my final home.

When Jesus spoke to the rich young ruler in Matthew 19, he found that this was a "good" man. But we know that good is not good enough. He told him this:

**[Matthew 19:21-22](#) "...If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."**

There is nothing here on earth worth losing our souls over.

**[Matthew 16:26](#) "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?..."**

Our reward is not here –we just sojourners, passing through on this earth. God has given us a good life, a good church, good friends, and families to help us enjoy the journey. But our final reward will be the day when we see our Savior and lay our crowns of life at His feet – for He alone, and the grace, knowledge, and wisdom He gives to us, will be the reason we're there.

**READ [v. 22 – v.31](#)**

God says that wisdom is primary and fundamental to a Christian life. It is the foundation on which all of our lives are built.

**[Colossians 2:2-3](#) "...to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."**

These next several verses are really a series of praises to Godly wisdom, but there is a very close reference to Jesus Christ, the giver of wisdom. As Solomon wrote this under the inspiration of God, I believe that these verses actually are speaking about Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the source of wisdom. Notice some facts that point to Jesus Christ in these verses:

\* He is a separate and distinct person, but someone whom the Lord possessed (v. 22), whom the Lord had set up (v.23), was brought forth (v.24-v.25), and was by the Lord (v. 30). This parallels closely with Hebrews 1:

**Hebrews 1:3** "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

\* He was in existence from prior to the beginning of time.

**John 1:1** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

**Revelation 3:14** "And unto the angel of the church the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God."

When Job was going through his trial, one of his friends, Eliphaz, asked him "...**wast thou made before the hills?**" (**Job 15:7**). Of course, he wasn't – but Christ was. He was, is, and always has been.

\* He was a part of creation coming into being

In v.27-v.29, we are shown that Christ was there when creation came into being. And from other scriptures, we see that He actually had a role in creation, being One with His Father, God.

**Ephesians 3:9** "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid by God, who created all thing by Jesus Christ."

**Hebrews 1:2** "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

**Colossians 1:16** "For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by Him, and for Him."

*"How able, how fit, is the Son of God to be the saviour of the world, who was the Creator of it!" - Matthew Henry*

\* He learned from His Father, God, and was His delight.

He did what He saw His Father do, always sought to please Him, and they had joy together.

**John 5:19** "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do. For what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

He always sought to please His Father. Even when He was baptized and came up out of the water, His Father placed His stamp of approval upon this obedient action.

**Mark 1:11** "And there came a voice from Heaven saying, Thou are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

**Isaiah 42:1** "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold. Mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth..."

\* He delighted in His creation, especially the people.

For all the beautiful things that were created on this earth, the one thing that gave the most joy was the inhabitants of the earth – you and me. Maybe it is because we are the one creature that was made in the image and likeness of God and Jesus.

**Genesis 1:26** "And God said, Let us make man after our image, after our likeness..."

Even though He foresaw all the problems we would cause, the pain we would bring upon Him, how sad we would make Him with our words and actions, He still loved us enough to not only create us, but to sustain us, die for us, and pray for us.

## READ [v.32-36](#)

In these final verses of this chapter, Solomon sums up the blessings that Godly wisdom brings to those who embrace it. It is designed to make us subject and accountable to the laws of God, to make us wise and enable us to live Godly lives, and to help convict us of things that are wrong in our lives so we can make it right.

To do this, he encourages us not only to hear but to also obey the Word of God through the wisdom God gives to us. Just as sheep know the voice of their shepherd, we should also have our minds, hearts, and ears trained to hear and obey God when He speaks to us through His word.

We do this by hearing the Word in sermons, in Sunday School lessons, in songs, and also by spending time reading and studying God's word ourselves. When we hear God speaking to us, several things must occur within our lives.

### \* We must be submissive

In v.33, Solomon tells us to "...hear the word...and refuse it not". We should not think that we do not need what God is revealing to us, or that we do not particularly like it. It is for ALL of us and if we refuse to hear and obey God's word and the wisdom it brings, the consequences are our own faults.

**[Luke 7:30](#) "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."**

### \* We must listen for and hear God's Word constantly

We must seek God's help daily in our lives – not just on Sunday mornings. I am convinced that our churches need to get back to a place where we are hungry to hear the Word of God. We need to look forward to the time when we can hear God's Word expounded in a sermon, or a lesson, or in song. We need to treasure the times we can spend time in God's Word alone and in peace, just waiting until we can hear Him speaking to us.

**[Luke 21:38](#) "And all the people came early in the morning to Him in the temple, for to hear Him."**

We must act on what Godly wisdom tells us to do. We must be “doers of the Word, not hearers only.” It is not enough just to hear what Godly wisdom instructs us to do, we must also adhere to those instructions.

**James 1:22 “But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”**

The chapter ends with a comparison of those who seek after and find Godly wisdom and then incorporate it into their lives, as opposed to those who refuse to accept God’s ways.

We are told that those who have Godly wisdom and use it are happy people. Solomon says that they find life as well as favor with the Lord. God our Father gave us His only Son to die for our sins that we might have a home in Heaven one day. He has revealed himself to us in so many ways that there is no excuse for someone denying the existence of God. For someone who has done all that for us, wouldn’t it be natural for us to want to please Him, to love Him, and to show our appreciation for a gift that we could not obtain on our own? Certainly – yet, many times, we live contrary to the directives and tenets that He has given us in His Word. We need to seek after Godly wisdom and use it daily to ensure we live our lives in a way that is pleasing to Almighty God.

For those that refuse Godly wisdom, the scripture states that they “wrong their own soul” and “love death”. What a contrast between the two. Those that refuse Godly wisdom, by definition, refuse Christ. They refuse His authority and the scripture indicates that this is viewed as hatred toward God. Their punishment is death.

In v. 36, it states that those that refuse Godly wisdom and hate God are responsible themselves for the consequences that result. They make a choice. They “wrong their own soul”. Therefore, their punishment of death is justified – it is not God’s will, but a result of the choice they have made.

*\*\* Exegetical material for this chapter taken primarily from Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible, Vol. III*