

Why We Need Proverbs

Proverbs 1

MEMORY VERSE

PROVERBS 1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Several sheets of newspaper crumpled into wads.

String and scissors.

A baking cup for each child, a pipe cleaner and crayons or markers.

ATTENTION GETTER!

The Shield of Wisdom

This game is similar to Dodge Ball. You will need several wadded up sheets of newspaper. The children will form a circle; one child will stand in the center. The children standing in the circle will try to tag the center person with the paper wads they throw. Once a child has been “tagged,” he must choose someone to take his place in the center. Choose a volunteer to go first and begin play.

After playing for a while; change the rules. The person in the middle will now be able to choose four other people to act as “human shields.” The children standing in the circle will still try to tag the center person, but the human shields can catch the newspapers and throw them back or hit them out of the way. Now, the center person is less likely to get tagged. After a couple of minutes, switch to let someone else be the center person.

After playing for a while, stop the game. Ask the children to pick up the newspapers from the floor and sit back down in the circle. Ask them what it was like to be the center person at first. Then, ask what it was like to be the center person after we allowed the “human shields.”

Our enemy, the devil is coming after us with fiery darts. We need God’s protection. Proverbs teaches us that if we will listen to God’s wisdom, we will be protected from the trickery of the enemy and the consequences of bad choices. Now, imagine the four human shields to be wisdom, instruction, knowledge, and understanding.

LESSON TIME!

Knowledge is a wonderful thing. The desire to learn and understand things is a natural part of each one of us. We build schools, institutes, and universities where learned professors can teach us about every subject under heaven. Today, technology has allowed us to tap into incredible sources of information--knowledge is everywhere.

Knowledge is good, but there is a big difference between knowledge (having the facts) and wisdom (applying those facts to life). We may increase in knowledge; but without wisdom, our knowledge is useless. **True wisdom comes from God.** God promises He will freely give His wisdom to those who seek it: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, left us a treasury of written wisdom. He gave practical insights and guidelines for life in the form of proverbs--short, easy to learn sayings that call a person to action. Proverbs give us priceless instruction to help us to live life the way God designed us to live and to keep us from the foolish tendencies we have to destroy ourselves and others.

PROVERBS 1:1-6

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding,

To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity;

To give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion—

A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,

To understand a proverb and an enigma, the words of the wise and their riddles.

Proverbs begins with a clear statement of its purpose to teach us wisdom for godly living. Even the simple-minded can be wise, while those who are already wise, can be made much wiser. God desires that we seek His wisdom so we know how to live and how to act in every situation. With His wisdom, we can be understanding, just, and fair in everything we do. Godly instructions for wise behavior will equip us to make good decisions when we face problems, temptations, and challenges. **True wisdom comes from God.**

PROVERBS 1:7

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Do you want to be wise? Wisdom begins when you fear the Lord—when you recognize God’s character and respond by revering, trusting, worshiping, obeying, and serving Him. Apart from Him, you cannot understand spiritual things.

Proverbs 12:15 declares, “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.” Fools are described throughout Proverbs as thickheaded, stubborn, and arrogant. They lack spiritual wisdom and discernment to make good decisions, yet refuse to listen to wise counsel. Their foolish, bad choices will hurt them; and in the end, they will face judgment. In this age of information, knowledge is plentiful; but wisdom is scarce. A person can have all of the knowledge in the world and still make foolish choices and be destroyed.

PROVERBS 1:8-9

My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother;

For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, and chains about your neck.

Solomon admonishes his son to hear his parents instructions and wear the ornament of their wise counsel and teaching in his life. Parents have a big responsibility to teach and train their children in the ways of the Lord. Children learn values, morals, and what is important by observing how their parents act and react to situations everyday. If parents live out a deep respect for God, their children will develop the same attitude. You may someday be a parent. Prepare yourself to one day be a godly, wise parent by growing in God’s wisdom now.

Today, the ornaments of body piercing and tattoos adorn many young people. Let us adorn ourselves with the ornament of God's wisdom, which begins with a deep respect for Him. Since, this is so different than the wisdom of this world, it will truly catch someone's eye.

PROVERBS 1:10-19

My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.

If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait to shed blood; let us lurk secretly for the innocent without cause;

Let us swallow them alive like Sheol, and whole, like those who go down to the Pit;

We shall find all kinds of precious possessions, we shall fill our houses with spoil;

Cast in your lot among us, let us all have one purse"—

My son, do not walk in the way with them, keep your foot from their path;

For their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.

Surely, in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird;

But they lie in wait for their own blood, they lurk secretly for their own lives.

So are the ways of everyone who is greedy for gain; it takes away the life of its owners.

Pressure to sin from other people can be hard to overcome, especially when you are enticed by those who are very persuasive. These verses give us a strong warning to avoid those who want to pull us into wicked and evil ways of living.

Perhaps, there is someone who you are calling a “friend” who wants you to do bad things. That person is not really a friend. Sin, though it may be attractive, is deadly! Wisdom will help you remember where that path leads and keep you from bringing pain and destruction upon yourself.

We need to choose our friends carefully. We need to stay away from those who want to draw us into activities that we know are wrong. Solomon warns us to keep our feet from their path—to not even go near those people who would try to lead us into evil. Instead, let us hang around friends that truly care about us and want to see us grow in our relationship with the Lord.

When a bird sees a trap set, it stays away (verse 17). So, we must turn and run from sin. We cannot be friendly with sin and expect our lives to remain unaffected. Being with those who seek to harm others for gain or pleasure will eventually bring harm to us. A wise person will not run around with fools.

Double-minded Duos

You will need string and scissors. Have the children form pairs. Gently tie the partners together at the knees with string. Explain that this is a SILENT game and NO talking is allowed.

When everyone is ready explain that you will be calling out commands for the children to follow as pairs. Here are some examples of commands you can give:

Skip around the room backwards

1. Hop up and down three times
2. Lie on your side
3. Hop around in a circle

You can make up your own commands as well. The book of James (often called the Proverbs of the New Testament) tells us that we should not be double-minded. Ask the children if they had difficulty following the commands as partners. (They probably all had a struggle.)

When two people, with two minds want to do something two different ways, it becomes difficult to get it done. We learn from Proverbs that our choice of friends is very important. We need to be careful about who we hang around with. Peer pressure is a strong temptation. If we hang out with others who want to sin and do bad things, they may cause us to be double-minded. If we want to be single-minded, serving the Lord, we should hang out with friends who encourage us in our relationship with God.

PROVERBS 1:20-27

Wisdom calls aloud outside; she raises her voice in the open squares.

She cries out in the chief concourses, at the openings of the gates in the city she speaks her words:

“How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge.

Turn at my rebuke; surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.

Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded,

Because you despised all my counsel, and would have none of my rebuke,

I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes,

When your terror comes like a storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you.

Solomon speaks of wisdom as one who shouts in the streets to get our attention. It's a beautiful picture of God's desire to share His wisdom with us. God's wisdom is in this world giving out invitations to people to come and enjoy—to receive wisdom—wisdom that will protect them and reward them with a great life blessed by the Lord. God has given us His wisdom. We are responsible to listen!

Again, the fool is addressed. Some people might think a fool is someone who is not very smart. A fool can be a smart person with great knowledge, but little wisdom—one who makes poor choices. A foolish person is unable to tell right from wrong or good from bad. With a deaf ear towards God's Word and His instruction, the foolish person despises the knowledge and wisdom of God. As a result, he will reap the consequences of his foolish choices. **True wisdom comes from God.**

PROVERBS 1:28-33

“Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently, but they will not find me.

Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD,

They would have none of my counsel and despised my every rebuke.

Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled to the full with their own fancies.

For the turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them;

But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil.”

How sad that many are not willing to listen and respond to God’s wisdom. How sad it is that foolish pride causes some to think more highly of their own ways and desires. For, God only desires our good. He would keep us from poor choices and the pain that results. He would keep us from destroying ourselves and others. He would give to us a rich and blessed life in fellowship with Him.

May we be those who not only listen, but intently pursue God’s wisdom as we would pursue a priceless treasure. Proverbs 3:13-15 reads, “Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding; for her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.” May we not fall short of the blessings God would bestow upon us. **True wisdom comes from God.**

The Wisdom Umbrella

For this craft you will need a baking cup for each child, a pipe cleaner, and crayons or markers. Have children each color their own design on the outside of the baking cup, turn it upside down, and slide a pipe cleaner through the center. Show them how to make a small loop in the pipe cleaner above the cup and a curve in the pipe cleaner at the other end to make it look like an umbrella.

God gift of wisdom is like an umbrella of protection for us. How foolish to attempt to live apart from the protection God would desires to give us!

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to fear the Lord and seek His wisdom as they would seek precious treasure. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.