



Join Us in Bible Center's September, 2016 Wisdom Challenge

The book of Proverbs was written by Solomon to train his sons in the ways of wisdom. In 22:17-24:22, he collected a month of wisdom, thirty wise sayings, so that those who would rule could review the key elements of wisdom.

In the thirty days of September, we are challenging ourselves, individually and as families, to brush up on our wisdom quotient. We challenge you to:

- Read** each *daily* saying before you leave your house to go to work or school, maybe before you eat breakfast.
- Reflect** on what you read throughout the morning.
- Re-read** it again during your lunch break.
- Reflect** on it again during the afternoon.
- Discuss** it with your family at supper using some of the questions provided.
- Pray** about changes you personally need to make before you go to sleep at night.

[All the Scriptures in this booklet are from the *New International Version*.]

^{22.17}Pay attention and turn your ear to the sayings of the wise;
apply your heart to what I teach,

¹⁸for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart
and have all of them ready on your lips.

¹⁹So that your trust may be in the LORD,
I teach you today, even you.

²⁰Have I not written thirty sayings for you,
sayings of counsel and knowledge,

²¹teaching you to be honest and to speak the truth,
so that you bring back truthful reports to those you serve?

As you reflect on this introduction and talk it over with your family tonight be sure to consider:

1. Why does wisdom need to be in our heart and on our lips? Isn't it enough to have it memorized, why must we talk about it?
2. How does wisdom help us trust in the Lord?
3. Why are 'truthful reports' essential?

^{22.22}Do not exploit the poor because they are poor
and do not crush the needy in court,

²³for the LORD will take up their case
and will exact life for life.

1. Why would someone exploit the poor and needy?
2. How have you seen people exploited or crushed?
3. How does the fear of the Lord serve as a motivation to try to help the poor and needy?

September 3

^{22.24}Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person,
do not associate with one easily angered,
²⁵or you may learn their ways
and get yourself ensnared.

1. Who do you know that is 'easily angered'?
2. Why is it a bad thing to be their friend?
3. How do we help a 'hot-tempered person'?

September 4

^{22.26}Do not be one who shakes hands in pledge
or puts up security for debts;
²⁷if you lack the means to pay,
your very bed will be snatched from under you.

1. What is this talking about?
2. Is it debt if you have the means to pay?
3. How does financial freedom give you options?

September 5

^{22.28}Do not move an ancient boundary stone
set up by your ancestors.

1. What is an 'ancient boundary stone'?
2. Why would it be bad to move it?
3. Does this apply to anything else today?

September 6

^{22.29}Do you see someone skilled in their work?

They will serve before kings;
they will not serve before officials of low rank.

1. How does a person get to be 'skilled in their work'?
2. What's wrong with serving under lower officials?
3. What skills do you have?

September 7

^{23.1}When you sit to dine with a ruler,
note well what is before you,
²and put a knife to your throat
if you are given to gluttony.

³Do not crave his delicacies,
for that food is deceptive.

1. What is gluttony?
2. How are ruler's delicacies 'deceptive'?

September 8

^{23.4}Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
do not trust your own cleverness.

⁵Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone,
for they will surely sprout wings
and fly off to the sky like an eagle.

1. How does cleverness work to wear us out in the pursuit of riches?
2. What is he saying about fleeting riches?
3. What is more important than accumulating riches?

September 9

^{23.6}Do not eat the food of a begrudging host,
do not crave his delicacies;
⁷for he is the kind of person
who is always thinking about the cost.
'Eat and drink,' he says to you,
but his heart is not with you.
⁸You will vomit up the little you have eaten
and will have wasted your compliments.

1. Have you ever dined with a 'begrudging host'? What was that like?
2. What does verse 8 mean?

September 10

^{23.9}Do not speak to fools,
for they will scorn your prudent words.

1. What would one say to fools?
2. Why should we save our breath?

September 11

^{23.10}Do not move an ancient boundary stone
or encroach on the fields of the fatherless,
¹¹for their Defender is strong;
he will take up their case against you.

1. Why would people take advantage of the fatherless?
2. Who defends them?

^{23.12}Apply your heart to instruction
and your ears to words of knowledge.

1. In what way is our education up to us?
2. If we don't apply ourselves, will we learn?

^{23.13}Do not withhold discipline from a child;
if you punish them with the rod, they will not die.

¹⁴Punish them with the rod
and save them from death.

1. Is it ever necessary to spank a child?
2. If you must spank a child, how should you do it?
3. What does disciplining our children have to do with our success?

^{23.15}My son, if your heart is wise,
then my heart will be glad indeed;

¹⁶my inmost being will rejoice
when your lips speak what is right.

1. Why do parents want children who 'speak what is right'?
2. Is it sufficient to say what is right?

^{23.17}Do not let your heart envy sinners,
but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD.

¹⁸There is surely a future hope for you,
and your hope will not be cut off.

1. Why would we secretly envy sinners?
2. Why is 'the fear of the Lord' essential?
3. Do nice guys always win?

^{23.19}Listen, my son, and be wise,
and set your heart on the right path:

²⁰Do not join those who drink too much wine
or gorge themselves on meat,

²¹for drunkards and gluttons become poor,
and drowsiness clothes them in rags.

1. What is a drunkard and a glutton?
2. Why should we not join them in what they do?

- ^{23.22} Listen to your father, who gave you life,
and do not despise your mother when she is old.
- ²³ Buy the truth and do not sell it—
wisdom, instruction and insight as well.
- ²⁴ The father of a righteous child has great joy;
a man who fathers a wise son rejoices in him.
- ²⁵ May your father and mother rejoice;
may she who gave you birth be joyful!
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1. Why would we ignore our parents?
2. What is our goal?

- ^{23.26} My son, give me your heart
and let your eyes delight in my ways,
- ²⁷ for an adulterous woman is a deep pit,
and a wayward wife is a narrow well.
- ²⁸ Like a bandit she lies in wait
and multiplies the unfaithful among men.
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1. Do you know any women like this?
2. What danger do they pose to a family?
3. Why does adultery occur?

^{23.29}Who has woe? Who has sorrow?

Who has strife? Who has complaints?

Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes?

³⁰Those who linger over wine,
who go to sample bowls of mixed wine.

³¹Do not gaze at wine when it is red,
when it sparkles in the cup,
when it goes down smoothly!

³²In the end it bites like a snake
and poisons like a viper.

³³Your eyes will see strange sights,
and your mind will imagine confusing things.

³⁴You will be like one sleeping on the high seas,
lying on top of the rigging.

³⁵'They hit me,' you will say, 'but I'm not hurt!
They beat me, but I don't feel it!
When will I wake up so I can find another drink?'

1. What happens to people when they get drunk?
2. How can we best avoid these pitfalls?

^{24.1}Do not envy the wicked,
do not desire their company;

²for their hearts plot violence,
and their lips talk about making trouble.

1. Why are the wicked to be avoided?
2. How do we stay away from these kind of people?

September 21

^{24.3}By wisdom a house is built,
and through understanding it is established;
⁴through knowledge its rooms are filled
with rare and beautiful treasures.

1. What does he mean by 'a house'?
2. How is it built and furnished?

September 22

^{24.5}The wise prevail through great power,
and those who have knowledge muster their strength.
⁶Surely you need guidance to wage war,
and victory is won through many advisers.

1. What power do the wise possess?
2. Who gives you guidance?
3. How do you evaluate the advice you receive?

September 23

^{24.7}Wisdom is too high for fools;
in the assembly at the gate
they must not open their mouths.

1. What does it mean that wisdom is 'too high'?
2. Why can't fools attain it?
3. Why would it be better for them to not open their mouths?

^{24.8}Whoever plots evil
will be known as a schemer.

⁹The schemes of folly are sin,
and people detest a mocker.

1. What is wrong with plotting evil?
2. Why is it folly to scheme?
3. Why are other people's opinions of us important?

^{24.10}If you falter in a time of trouble,
how small is your strength!

¹¹Rescue those being led away to death;
hold back those staggering toward slaughter.

¹²If you say, 'But we knew nothing about this,'
does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?
Does not he who guards your life know it?
Will he not repay everyone
according to what they have done?

1. What is required in 'a time of trouble'?
2. How does this balance the teaching to 'not speak to fools'?
3. Why is saying 'we knew nothing' not an excuse?
4. Why should we put ourselves at risk to stop others?

September 26

^{24.13}Eat honey, my son, for it is good;
honey from the comb is sweet to your taste.

¹⁴Know also that wisdom is like honey for you:
If you find it, there is a future hope for you,
and your hope will not be cut off.

1. How is wisdom like honey?
2. Why is it a future hope?

September 27

^{24.15}Do not lurk like a thief near the house of the righteous,
do not plunder their dwelling place;

¹⁶for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again,
but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes.

1. Why would anyone 'lurk' around someone's house?
2. How do they righteous rise when they fall?
3. Why do the wicked 'stumble'?

September 28

^{24.17}Do not gloat when your enemy falls;
when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice,

¹⁸or the LORD will see and disapprove
and turn his wrath away from them.

1. Why would we gloat over our enemy?
2. Why does the Lord disapprove of that?

^{24.19}Do not fret because of evildoers
or be envious of the wicked,
²⁰for the evildoer has no future hope,
and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out.

1. Why would we 'fret because of evildoers'?
2. Why don't they have a future hope?
3. What is our future hope?

^{24.21}Fear the LORD and the king, my son,
and do not join with rebellious officials,
²²for those two will send sudden destruction on them,
and who knows what calamities they can bring?

1. Why should we fear the Lord?
2. Why should we not rebel against the king?
3. Are there ever times to join a rebellion?