

THE GOSPEL PROJECT – CHRONOLOGICAL

A KINGDOM *established*

GOD ALL WISE

Wisdom for God's People

Paul wrote in **Romans 16:27 (ESV)** ²⁷ *to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.* Our God is not only the all wise God; He is the only God!!! **1 Timothy 1:17 (ESV)** ¹⁷ *To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

As we continue our study of the life of Solomon, let's lift our hearts in praise and give glory to the wise and only God – Jehovah. There is no god like Jehovah! One of the best ways for Christians to bring glory to our God is to live our lives wisely and in awe of Him. The Life Application Bible reminds us that knowledge is good but there is a vast difference between knowledge (having the facts) and wisdom (applying those facts to life). We may amass knowledge but without wisdom our knowledge is useless, We must learn to 'live out' what we know in Christ Jesus.

The wise King Solomon's legacy of wisdom is found in the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. They are practical guidelines for living. When Solomon recorded them they were inspired by the very Spirit of God.

As we briefly look into Proverbs, we need to understand that each proverb is a statement of a general truth – not necessarily a divine promise. For example, **Proverbs 16:7 (ESV)** ⁷ *When a man's ways please the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.* This proverb is a general truth not a divine promise. Both David and Jesus, pleased the LORD but they still had enemies. However, Jesus did make us a divine promise of peace. **John 14:27 (ESV)** ²⁷ *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

Another example of general truth is found in **Proverbs 10:27 (ESV)** ²⁷ *The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.* Although the fear of the LORD will lead to healthy habits that generally prolong life, this proverb does not mean someone who dies young was wicked. Jesus did give us the divine promise of prolonged life – more specifically eternal life! **John 3:16 (ESV)** ¹⁶ *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Wisdom is rooted in the fear of God.

Read Proverbs 1:1-7 (ESV) ¹ *The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:* ² *To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight,* ³ *to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity;* ⁴ *to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth—* ⁵ *Let the wise hear and*

increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance,⁶ to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles.⁷ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

A proverb has been defined as a “short statement based on long experience.” It is believed that along with writing individual proverbs Solomon also made part of his life’s work collecting proverbs of others. We read in ***Ecclesiastes 12:9 (ESV)***⁹ *Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care.* Solomon had a heart to share his knowledge with others. We learned last week from ***1 Kings 4*** that not all of his proverbs were preserved in this book. When we come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, it becomes our responsibility to share that wisdom with others. This is the wisdom that will last. Jesus gave us our commission in ***Matthew 28:19 (ESV)***¹⁹ *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

What does ‘knowing wisdom’ mean for those of us living under the covenant of the New Testament? It means knowing Christ. ***1 Corinthians 1:30-31 (ESV)***³⁰ *And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”*

Jesus is our wisdom! A string of degrees and doctorates behind our name is not the key to wisdom. The key to wisdom is knowing Christ. ***Philippians 3:10 (ESV)***¹⁰ *that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.* We are wise when we die to self and serve the all wise God.

Life is a continuing battle between being wise or remaining foolish. Solomon’s proverb shows the contrast: *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.* In our information age, we can immediately Google any bit of information and appear ‘smart’ but we need to hold fast to the truth of God that the foundation of genuine knowledge begins with the fear of the LORD. ***Hebrews 13:6 (ESV)***⁶ *So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”* Wisdom leads us to faith in God.

Read Proverbs 3:1-4 (ESV)¹ *My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments,² for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.³ Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.*

I am told that the phrase ‘my son’ occurs 23 times in the book of Proverbs reminding us of the importance of passing the wisdom of parents down to children. According to God’s Word, a primary function of the family is to pass godly wisdom from one generation to the next and that includes general principles for righteous living.. We know that many families do not pass godly wisdom on to their children. This is why as followers of Christ we can play a significant role in the lives of the children of others. One of the men we used to visit with

frequently at the prison would say, “I come to the chapel for my family visits!” I am not bragging about that. I mention it as an example of one way Christians can fill in the gaps of family in the lives of others and share the wisdom of God.

Read Proverbs 3:5-8 (ESV) ⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.* ⁶ *In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.* ⁷ *Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.* ⁸ *It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.*

If we did a roll call of favorite verses among God’s children, **Proverbs 3:5-6** would be among the favorites. In 1996, our church compiled a devotional booklet to be used by our members as we sought the Lord’s will for our church family. M.H. Crutchfield a long-time member who has since gone to be with the Lord shared **Proverbs 3:5-6** as his favorite passage and said in part, “If we are in **His Will** we will win.” I love that! Paul said in **Philippians 3:12 (ESV)** ¹² *Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.* Heaven is our reward in the life to come but a relationship with the Son of the Living God is our reward on this earth when we trust Him in faith – **F**orsaking **A**ll **I** **T**rust **H**im! When we genuinely put our faith and trust in God, it refreshes us – it heals us!

Read Proverbs 3:9-10 (ESV) ⁹ *Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce;* ¹⁰ *then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.*

Throughout scripture we are taught to honor God with our wealth. I always like to say a person can never out give God. I guess I didn’t originate that thought. It is Life Principle #23 by Charles Stanley. It is confirmed by God’s Word. **Luke 6:38 (ESV)** ³⁸ *give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”*

This mention of firstfruits refers to the practice of giving for God’s use the first and best portion of the harvest. Many people today are quick to give to the Salvation Army, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and many other charities. However, if you look at what is given, you will quickly see that it is leftovers – not their first and not their best.

Proverbs 3:11-12 (ESV) ¹¹ *My son, do not despise the LORD’s discipline or be weary of his reproof,* ¹² *for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.*

Satan would like for us to believe that the difficulties of life are proof that God does not love us. We say, “if the Lord really loved **me**, this wouldn’t be happening.” When you think of people in the Bible, nearly all had times of suffering, sorrow, or pain. Some were innocent sufferers like Job and Joseph who were allowed to suffer for God’s good purposes. We recently studied how David suffered chastisement for his sins. Paul was told that his thorn in the flesh was to help him recognize the sufficiency of God’s grace. Whether your pain is for

chastisement for sin or discipline to grow, pain and suffering is always a call to a closer walk with the Lord. We are wise when we realize that chastisement is not the same as punishment.

Wisdom shows us how to live in the world God made.

Read Proverbs 22:1 (ESV) ¹ *A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.*

Taking the name of Jesus is the wisest choice in the world. I can still hear George Beverly Shea from the Billy Graham crusades of long ago singing – I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold.

Read Proverbs 22:2 (ESV) ² *The rich and the poor meet together; the LORD is the maker of them all.*

Solomon did not know his descendent named Jesus, but when I read this I cannot help but think of the expression that the ground is level at the foot of the cross meaning we all must come to Jesus the same way.

Read Proverbs 22:3 (ESV) ³ *The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it.*

Some might consider it weak to walk away from danger. God's Word says it prudent. If they are shooting on my street, I need to stay in the house and not run outside. If I do go out, there is a good possibility I will suffer for it.

Read Proverbs 22:4 (ESV) ⁴ *The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life.*

My thoughts on this verse turn to **2 Corinthians 12:10 (ESV)** ¹⁰ *For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

Read Proverbs 22:6 (ESV) ⁶ *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

This verse has encouraged godly parents to raise their young children to know the Lord down through the centuries. It is also a passage that has comforted many Christian parents regarding their wayward children with the hope that they will return to the faith of the parents when he or she is older since they were raised to know the Lord. However, if this does not happen, a parent should not take it to mean that God has broken a promise. This verse is a general truth.

When you read Proverbs remember that the words are practical and wise for daily living. You will discover principles, warnings, and counsels that will help you. As you contemplate wisdom, remember this: **1 Corinthians 3:19 (ESV)** ¹⁹ *For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness,"*