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Wisdom from God

Key Theme

- God wants us to study His Word.

Key Passages

- 1 Kings 4:34, Proverbs 1:7, 2:5, 3:7, 9:10, 2:1–6;
Colossians 2:2b–3

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe the source of all wisdom.
- Identify different things we can learn from Proverbs.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

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Students will place paper strips at 1 Kings 4, Proverbs 1, and Colossians 2. Students will practice the memory verse by unscrambling the words on the activity sheet and then reciting the verse to each other or to the class.



Activity 1: Wisdom from God Class Notes

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Students will fill out the Wisdom from God Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

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The wisdom we need to seek—the only wisdom worth having—is wisdom we can receive from God and His Word. It's a treasure God wants us to mine. The book of Proverbs, written by the wisest man that ever lived, is full of answers to everyday problems we all face. If we study and apply the wisdom in this book, our lives will change.



Activity 2: Proverbs Match-Up

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Students will play a game in teams where they have to match verses from Proverbs to cards that describe what each proverb is about.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO



COME ON IN

- Cut paper into strips for each student to mark today's study passages in 1 Kings 4, Proverbs 1 and 2, and Colossians 2.
- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.



WISDOM FROM GOD CLASS NOTES

- Print one Wisdom from God Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.



PROVERBS MATCH-UP

- Print and cut one set of Proverbs Match-Up Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for each team of 2–3 students. Keep the Teacher Guide for your use.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Memory Verse Poster
- Paper strips
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student

- Wisdom from God Class Notes
- Wisdom from God Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

- Student Take Home Sheets

- Proverbs Match-Up Card sets
- Proverbs Match-Up Teacher Guide



Memory Verse

1 Chronicles 29:11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

God blessed Solomon with wisdom. In fact, God gave Solomon a wise and understanding heart such that he was the wisest man who ever lived (1 Kings 3:12). This wisdom came in response to Solomon's request as a young king for wisdom from God to judge the people properly and according to God's will. As a young king, he demonstrated his humble dependence on God. He knew that in order to properly discern between good and evil he would need godly wisdom (1 Kings 3:6–9).

Using the wisdom He gave to Solomon, God inspired the writing of the book of Proverbs, most of which was written by Solomon. The proverbs give us basic godly principles for life in simple, straightforward language. They deal with all aspects of life: money, time, friendships, lust, murder, laziness, theft, personal habits, faith, trusting God, etc. These statements are often not meant as absolutes, but general principles and instructions from God.

Care should be taken while studying the proverbs to compare Scripture with Scripture before conclusions are drawn. For example, Proverbs 22:4 says, "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life." Is every humble Christian rich? Unfortunately, many teachers take passages like this and teach them as absolute promises of material wealth. We must be careful that our understanding of each of these nuggets of wisdom is applied alongside the whole counsel of God.

The opening lines from Solomon make it clear that it is the fear of the Lord that brings knowledge and understanding, which we need to interpret Scripture (Proverbs 1:7). Solomon repeatedly instructs his sons, the immediate audience of much of the book of Proverbs, to seek wisdom and understanding from God—the source of all wisdom. He tells them to "cry out," to "lift up your voice," to "search," and to "treasure" the words of wisdom. The truths contained in God's Word are there, but we must be diligent to search them out, to understand them, to meditate on them, and to apply them to our lives. None of this can happen apart from God's grace in our lives, which gives us the desire and ability to understand His truths.

As stated above, Proverbs teaches repeatedly that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. That same fear of the Lord—reverence for who God is and fear of His wrath and judgment—will lead us to Christ in whom we find all the treasures and fullness of under-

standing and wisdom (Colossians 2:2–3). As we set our minds on Christ and meditate on how He was the perfect example of wisdom, we begin to understand better how to behave in a way that will honor God. Ultimately, true godly wisdom will come in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. And this will happen only through searching the Scriptures in a way that will show ourselves approved to God (2 Timothy 2:15).

Apart from faith, nothing that we do pleases God (Hebrews 11:6). The proverbs offer wise and universal principles for living that people can put into practice, regardless of whether they have submitted their lives to Christ or not. And in many cases, according to God's goodness, living by these principles will provide benefits to Christians and non-Christians. However, these blessings rendered to non-Christians are temporary.

The proverbs instruct on moral and right behavior. We must be aware that our behavior is not what brings us favor in the eyes of God. Nothing we do can commend us to God. It is only through the perfect obedience of Christ on our behalf that we are considered righteous in His eyes.

As you teach this lesson, be careful not to promote a gospel of works. Obedience to God through works is pleasing to Him, but our salvation is founded solely on the grace of God through the gift of faith—not by works (Ephesians 2:8–10). Gratitude for our salvation based on what Christ has done, and the fact that we are new creatures in Christ with new desires that want to honor and please Him, will encourage (and enable) right behavior lived out according to the wisdom of Proverbs.

Much of the book of Proverbs was likely written early in Solomon's reign. Scripture tells us that Solomon often failed to heed his own advice, and later in life, his heart was disloyal to the Lord (1 Kings 11:4). You might think that, being the wisest man on the planet, he would never make a mistake. Well, that just wasn't the case. Have you ever done something that you knew wasn't what God intended for you? Did you ever offer someone advice and then did the opposite yourself? This seems to be the case with Solomon. He knew it was wrong to offer sacrifices to other gods, but he did it (1 Kings 3:3). He knew God forbade the king to have multiple wives, but he married many (1 Kings 11:1–13). He knew that God was the only true source of fulfillment, yet he sought it in God's creation (Ecclesiastes 2). We see in his later writing, the book of Ecclesiastes, that Solomon lamented the time and energy he squandered pursuing the things of the world—and neglecting the things of God. In fact, Solomon strongly

warned the generations to follow to avoid the sinful mistakes he had made.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

As you examine cultures around the world, you will find the wisdom of the ages preserved in various forms. Proverbs from around the world have been passed down through the generations in verbal and written form. You can find an example by visiting your local Chinese restaurant! While there may be some truth to many of these proverbs, they are born out of experience rather than wisdom from God. Because they are not grounded in a fear of the Lord (Proverbs 1:7, 2:5–6), those proverbs are worldly wisdom, not godly wisdom.

Another problem with many cultural proverbs is that they get equated with biblical proverbs. If you took a survey, many people would not be able to tell the difference. For example, the phrase “God helps those who help themselves,” is thought by many to be from the Bible when, in fact, it is the worldly wisdom found in Poor Richard’s Almanac. This is why we must constantly check everything that we hear against Scripture and help to equip our students to do the same. Only as

we look to Christ and the truths found in the Word of God can we truly exercise wisdom.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord, you alone offer wisdom that is more valuable than pure gold. Forgive me for the times I have sought after the wisdom of man. It is too easy to run to the computer or pick up the phone when I need advice. Instead, I should seek you and your Word when I need wisdom and counsel. Give me courage, Lord, to turn others to your Word when they come to me for answers. My students need this life-transforming truth! Grant them the ability to recognize the difference between perfect truth and wisdom that only comes from God and counterfeit wisdom that man offers. Holy Spirit, move through the words and the activities in this lesson. May they inspire us to begin a new habit of going to the Word for answers and trusting the Lord alone for true wisdom.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will mark their Bibles at 1 Kings 4, Proverbs 1 and 2, and Colossians 2 with strips of paper.
- They will recite the memory verse after they unscramble the words on the Memory Verse Review Sheet.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. Students should unscramble the letters of the missing words and then recite the verse to you or another student. Each week the verse will get harder to unscramble. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Wisdom from God Class Notes

MATERIALS

- Wisdom from God Class Notes
- Wisdom from God Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Try not to work ahead. You will fill in the blanks as we come to them.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

We will get a better understanding of the wisdom of God and where it comes from as we complete our class notes and study our lesson today.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

1 Kings 4:34

Solomon, David's Son, had built the Temple. The people now had a place to worship God. Remember that when Solomon was anointed king, the Lord asked him what he wanted from God? Solomon's answer was that he wanted a heart of wisdom. God was pleased with Solomon's request and granted him the wisdom of mind and heart that he requested. He was a very wise man and led Israel well. Just how wise was Solomon? Look up 1 Kings 4:34. Let's find out. *Assign a reader.*

? **How wise was Solomon?** *Allow discussion. Very wise. Men from many nations came to hear his wisdom.*

The Bible says that men from many nations came to hear him because they had heard of his wisdom. It wasn't that Solomon just knew a lot of things. He did know a lot. But wisdom is different than knowledge. Wisdom allows us to see people and things more like God sees them. Today we are going to take a look at the book of Proverbs. This book contains a lot of King Solomon's wisdom. He was the main writer of this book. King Solomon knew and wrote about many different things. Let's get started and see what we can learn from this very wise man's writings.

Turn in your Bibles to the book of Proverbs. *Wait for students to find the book.*

? **How many chapters does Proverbs have?** 31.

Good. Keep your Bibles open to Proverbs. For right now, I want you to follow along on your class notes. The verses we're going to discuss today are there. Let's read the first four verses on the class notes. Don't forget to say the reference—where it's found in the Bible. *Divide the verses between members of the class to read aloud or read all together.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Now we're going to answer some questions about these verses so we can better understand what God is saying to us through them.

Observe the Text

? **What is one repeated phrase you see in these verses?** *Fear of the Lord.*

? **OK. So how will you answer #1 on your class notes?** *Fear of the Lord.*

? **Right. So, what is God trying to tell us in all of these verses? Where does wisdom come from?** *The fear of the Lord. Fill in #2 on your class notes.*

? **Wow! Wisdom comes from fearing the Lord. But what does that mean? Are we supposed to be afraid of God?** *Allow for answers.*

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

Proverbs 1:7, 2:5,
3:7, 9:10

► After filling in each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it.

HOLY JUST

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

We need to fear God. And it is good to be afraid of Him. But the fear of the Lord should lead to praising Him and worshipping Him and loving Him with all our hearts, minds, and souls. Let me explain.

Fearing God comes when we understand better who He is. We have to know that God hates sin because He is holy. And God must judge sin because He is just. Because we are sinners, we know that He must punish us. This is the beginning of what it means to fear God. *Review the meaning of these from the Attributes of God Poster.*

However, we know that because of Jesus and the sacrifice He made, God's judgment will not come on those who trust Him and turn from their sin. So, if we know Jesus and believe in Him, we don't have to fear God's punishment for sin because Jesus took it on the Cross. But we still fear God—and that means we honor Him, worship Him, respect Him, and obey His commandments. He still demands that from His children. We don't need to be scared of God or His punishment if we trust Jesus, but we do need to fear Him as the great and mighty Creator of everything, including us!

- ? Let's complete #3 on your class notes together. What are four words that describe what it means to fear the Lord? *Discuss together. Honor, worship, respect, obey. Have students fill in #3 on their class notes.*

Take a look at the next verse on your class notes. It's from the book of Colossians. Colossians is in the New Testament. Colossians is a letter that was written by the Apostle Paul to the Christians in the city of Colossae. In this passage Paul was explaining something about Jesus Christ. *Assign a reader or read together. Read Colossians 2:2b-3 from the class notes.*

- ? Who is Paul talking about in this verse? Who is mentioned? *God, the Father, Christ.*
- ? What is Paul saying about Jesus? What is hidden in Jesus? *All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*
- ? Is Jesus God? *Yes, He is part of the Trinity.*

Paul is confirming that wisdom comes from God—not only God the Father, but also God the Son, Jesus Christ.

Look at #4 on your class notes. Based on Colossians 2:2b-3, what is hidden in Christ? Complete #4. *Wisdom, knowledge.*

Discover the Truth

Wisdom comes from God—but not only God the Father, but also Jesus Christ. In Him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Solomon knew that his wisdom needed to come from God. We have to understand that, too! Any wisdom we might have comes from knowing God—knowing what He is like, having a healthy reverence and fear for His power, might, and holiness. This will bring us wisdom. Not only that, but

Colossians 2:2b-3

- Remind students that God is a Trinity and that the Father, Son, and Spirit are each God.

WISE

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

the Apostle Paul confirmed for us that God the Father and Jesus hold the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

It should be no surprise that God is the source of all wisdom. He is all-wise in all He does. Because He is all-wise, we know that He does everything perfectly and without mistakes. *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster.*

But how can we become wise? Where do we go to know more about God? Where did Solomon turn when he wanted wisdom? What is our very best resource? *Allow discussion. The Bible—God's Word.*

Solomon asked God for wisdom. We can ask God to give us wisdom through His Word. The Bible promises that as we learn and grow in our knowledge of God the Father and Jesus through Bible study, we will gain wisdom.

- ? So look at #5 on your class notes. How will you complete that? Where can we get wisdom? *Allow discussion. The Bible. God's Word.*



READ THE WORD

Very good. We know that in Jesus Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And we know we can get that wisdom and knowledge by learning more about God in the Bible. But God gives even more specific instructions on how to gain wisdom. And we'll find that in His Word. Look at Proverbs 2:1–5 on your class notes. Let's read it from there. *Choose students to read the passage aloud.*

Proverbs 2:1–5

EXAMINE THE WORD

Beautiful! This part of Scripture gives us eight commands. Those commands will help us understand how we are to get wisdom.

Observe the Text

- ? Look at Proverbs 2:1. What are the commands here? What two things does God tell us to do? *Receive His words and treasure His commands.*

Good. OK, now underline those two phrases on your class notes. They're important. We are to receive His words and treasure His commands.

- ? Where do we find His words and His commands? *In the Bible.*

- ? Now in Proverbs 2:2, what does God tell us to do? *Incline our ears to hear and apply our hearts to understand.*

That's right. Now underline those two phrases on your class notes. God wants us to listen to and act on His Word—that is what He means by incline our ears and apply our hearts.

? And what are we to incline our ears and apply our hearts to? Look in Proverbs 2:2. *Wisdom and understanding.*

? Now moving on. In Proverbs 2:3 what are we to do? *Cry out, and lift our voice.* Underline those phrases in Proverbs 2:3 on your class notes.

God wants us to cry out for discernment, lift our voices to understanding. This understanding comes through Him and through His Word. That is where we must turn for wisdom and understanding.

? Now on to Proverbs 2:4. How should we look for wisdom? *Seek her as silver, search for her as for treasure.*

? Underline those phrases in Proverbs 2:4. This says seek HER as silver and search for HER as treasure. What are we to seek and search for? What is “her” referring to? What have we been talking about? What are we seeking? *Allow for answers. God’s Word, wisdom, understanding.*

? We are almost finished. Let’s read over the phrases we have already underlined. Who wants to read? *Assign readers.*

? What do all of these phrases really mean? How do we do these things? *Allow for discussion.*

They mean pretty much just what they say! Listen to God’s Word when it is taught and preached, treasure your Bible and learn to love it! When you hear something from God’s Word, figure out what it means for you in your life. How can His Word change what you do every day? Ask God to help you understand. The Bible can be confusing at times, but because it’s a treasure, don’t ever stop trying to learn more and more from it. God is calling all of us to a life of Bible study, a life of wanting to know His Word, a life of learning more about Him.

? And look at the last verse in Proverbs 2 listed on your class notes. It is Proverbs 2:5. What will a life of Bible study bring us? *We will understand the fear of the Lord and find knowledge of God.*

Underline the phrases and put a star by verse 5 on your class notes.

Discover the Truth

God wants us to study His Word. We can gain wisdom and learn truth through His Word. He tells us in Proverbs 2:1–5 what we must do to understand the fear of the Lord—which is the beginning of wisdom—and to find the knowledge of God. We can know God better, know His Son Jesus better, gain wisdom and understanding—God has given us all we need. It is in His Holy Word. And now it is up to each of us to study and learn it.





Proverbs Match-Up

MATERIALS

- A set of Proverbs Match-Up Cards for each team of 2–3 students
- Proverbs Match-Up Teacher Guide

INSTRUCTIONS

Game directions: Divide class into appropriate teams. Students will place their cards face down on the floor or tables. They will then take turns turning over two cards at a time, looking for pairs. A matching pair is the proverb card and the explanation card describing what it means. If a student gets a match, he or she will keep the cards. Play will resume with the next student.

When finished, have students read off the cards they matched. Discuss the wisdom of the proverb and how it can be applied to our lives. Game options are on the Proverbs Match-Up Teacher Guide.

We know that Solomon was a very wise man. In fact, he was the wisest man who

ever lived—except for Jesus, of course. His wisdom came from God. And God inspired him to write the book of Proverbs so he could pass some of his wisdom on to us. The book of Proverbs covers many different areas. We’re going to see just a few of them as we play this Proverbs Match-up Game.

Proceed with the game as you have chosen to play it, according to the directions found in the Proverbs Match-Up Teacher Guide.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Review the cards as you connect to the truth. The book of Proverbs gives all types of basic instructions on how we are to live our lives. God’s Word is true! The book of Proverbs was written nearly 3,000 years ago and we can still learn from it in so many different ways.



Applying God’s Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. God inspired him to write these Proverbs down for us. And even all these years later, we can learn from them. In fact, God’s Word is the only place to really find true wisdom.

- ?** What does the Lord say we must do to get wisdom? Look at your class notes. Look at Proverbs 2:1–5. *Receive His Word, treasure His Word, listen to His Word, apply our hearts to understand His Word, cry out for understanding, seek wisdom as silver or a treasure. Listen, believe, put into practice, study God’s Word, ask God for wisdom, and don’t give up digging into God’s Word to find it!*

The book of Proverbs can give us wisdom on a lot of things that concern us right now! Like being a good friend, being wise, honoring and obeying our parents, the way we should talk, being honest, how to spend our money, working hard, and many, many more. Go to the book of Proverbs. You'll find lots of good advice from God.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

We all like being smart and knowing things. But just knowing things will not always help us. God tells us to seek wisdom. And the wisdom we need to seek—the only wisdom worth having—is wisdom we can only get from God. God wants us to study His Word to get the wisdom He wants to give us.

The book of Proverbs, written by Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, is full of answers to everyday problems we all face. If we had the good sense and “wisdom” to seek God in this book, to really listen to the lessons and then live them out, we would see our lives change. We would be on the road to godly wisdom—a wisdom that comes from God through His Word.

You might say that it's hard work to get wisdom. Yes, God says we should seek after it like fine treasure. And just as we would be willing to spend time and hard effort to dig gold or diamonds out of the ground because they would make us rich, we should be willing to spend time and effort studying God's Word, memorizing it, and applying it to our lives.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

1 Chronicles 29:11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for providing His Word and making true wisdom available to us.
- Thank God that we can find the answers to problems we experience today in a book that was written 3,000 years ago.
- Ask God to help us to persevere on our Christian walk—not to give up seeking God's wisdom and living it out in our lives.

