

Proverbs 1 – Wisdom’s Call: A Father’s Plea and a Divine Warning

1. Introduction and Purpose (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.*

These opening verses serve as a preface. Solomon—the wisest man of his time—lays out his purpose: *to impart wisdom*. This isn’t just intellectual insight; it’s practical, moral guidance that helps a person live rightly, understand justice, and walk with discernment.

Personal Application:

Wisdom isn’t limited to the old. God wants the young, the simple, and the teachable to grow in understanding. Wherever you are in life—beginner or mature—there is always room to learn. Are you teachable? God’s wisdom is available, but it begins with humility.

2. The Foundation of Knowledge (Proverbs 1:7)

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

The Hebrew word for “fear” (*yirah*) implies awe, reverence, and a deep respect for God—not a paralyzing terror, but a recognition of His holiness and authority. True wisdom begins not with self-confidence, but with a right view of God and a hatred for evil (see Proverbs 8:13).

Personal Application:

Our culture celebrates tolerance, even of what God calls evil. But biblical wisdom starts by learning to *hate* evil—not people, not struggle, but evil itself. If you want to grow in understanding, ask yourself: *Do I fear the Lord enough to resist evil, even when it’s socially accepted?*

3. Parental Instruction and the Voice of Temptation (Proverbs 1:8–19)

*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.*

God designed families to be the first classroom of wisdom. A child who learns to listen to godly parents will be adorned with grace and discernment.

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

If they say, “Come with us, let us lie in wait to shed blood...”

(Paraphrased from Proverbs 1:10–19)

Solomon warns against the pull of peer pressure, especially toward violence or dishonest gain. Evil often looks exciting, promising quick rewards and shared spoils. But in the end, it ensnares and destroys those who pursue it.

Personal Application:

Temptation often comes with the promise of belonging and reward—but it’s a trap. God is not trying to restrict your freedom when He warns you. He’s trying to *protect* your future. When sin calls, *consent not*. Say no before you’re even asked. Set your direction in advance.

4. Wisdom’s Open Invitation (Proverbs 1:20–33)

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... (vv. 20–21)

Wisdom is personified as a woman crying out in public places. She is not hiding in a monastery or reserved for the elite. Her invitation is loud and clear for all who will listen.

“How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?”

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

God is not withholding wisdom—it’s freely offered to any who will turn, listen, and respond. But refusal has consequences.

“Because I have called and you refused... I also will laugh at your calamity... Then they will call on me, but I will not answer.” (vv. 24–28)

This is not cruelty from God. It’s the natural consequence of hardened hearts. When people continually reject God’s counsel, they eventually reach a point where they no longer hear—or care. Wisdom’s voice grows fainter the longer it’s ignored.

“They shall eat the fruit of their own way... but whoever listens to me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil.” (vv. 31–33)

The chapter ends with a sharp contrast: those who reject wisdom reap destruction; those who embrace it find peace and safety.

Personal Application:

God is patient, but His wisdom won’t shout forever. If you’ve been ignoring His voice—through Scripture, godly counsel, or conviction—*now* is the time to turn. Don’t wait for calamity to teach you what wisdom could have prevented.

Final Thoughts: Choose the Way of Wisdom

Proverbs 1 sets the tone for the entire book: There is a right path and a wrong path. God is not hiding wisdom—it's calling out. The question is: Will we listen?

- Wisdom begins with *fearing God* and *hating evil*.
- Wisdom invites us to *heed instruction*, especially from those who love us.
- Wisdom protects us from the *ruin that comes from following sin*.
- Wisdom offers *peace, safety, and understanding*—but only to those who respond.

“But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil.” (Proverbs 1:33)

Are you listening?