

DAY 1 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Who are you vulnerable to? Who do you allow to affect and influence you?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it. **Proverbs 4:23 NIV**

Proverbs 1:1-7 in two translations:

These are the proverbs of Solomon, David's son, king of Israel. Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise. Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair. These proverbs will give insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young. Let the wise listen to these proverbs and become even wiser. Let those with understanding receive guidance by exploring the meaning in these proverbs and parables, the words of the wise and their riddles. Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. **(New Living Translation “NLT”)**

The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. **(New International Version “NIV”)**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

What do you believe it means to “guard your heart”? What does it NOT mean?

Have you ever taken the time to read through the entire book of Proverbs? (HINT: one chapter a day will allow you to complete it in a month!)

When do you anticipate completing your learning and stop growing in wisdom?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, teach me to fear you so that I can focus on your wisdom, your ways and your kindness.

DAY 2 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is your main source of teaching and information on a daily basis?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.
Proverbs 1:7 NIV

“How long will you who are simple love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? Repent at my rebuke! Then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings.

But since you refuse to listen when I call and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand, since you disregard all my advice and do not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh when disaster strikes you; I will mock when calamity overtakes you— when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you.

“Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me, since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD. Since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes. For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm.” **Proverbs 1:22-33 NIV**

Sermon Insights:

There is a direct correlation between our concept of God and the direction of our lives.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

How have you historically responded to God’s rebuke/correction? Has that path towards trusting God’s rebuke been made easier or harder by the people who have had authority over you in the past?

Consider the kind motivation of the warnings, both for those who need to reconsider their dangerous path and for those need to be encouraged on their wise path. Why is the “fear of the Lord” the safest path to walk in this life?

What decision are you going to make RIGHT NOW about your choices today?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, “make known to me your teachings” so I can live in “safety and be at ease, without fear of harm.”

DAY 3 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Do you like adventure?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.
Proverbs 1:7 NIV

Isaiah wrote, In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.” Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” **Isaiah 6:1-8 NIV**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Two important truths are powerfully obvious in this Scripture: the intense glory of God and the fearful guilt of people. Which are you focused on most—God’s glory or your guilt?

Have you humbly invited God to cleanse you of your guilt so you can be at peace?

“The whole earth is full of his glory” – how do you see the glory of God in creation?

How does seeing God more clearly put into perspective your worries, fears and inadequacies?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, I want to see and focus on your glory. I fear you because you are great; I fear you more because you are also kind. That humbles and draws me near to you. Teach me to fear and trust that you will be kind. As a great writer once pointed out, “You are not safe...but you are good.”

DAY 4 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Who is the wisest person you have ever known? Do you imitate that person?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

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

Proverbs 1:7 NIV

Don't envy sinners, but always continue to fear the LORD. You will be rewarded for this; your hope will not be disappointed. **Proverbs 23:17-18 NLT**

The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down. Whoever fears the LORD walks uprightly, but those who despise him are devious in their ways. A fool's mouth lashes out with pride, but the lips of the wise protect them. Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox come abundant harvests. An honest witness does not deceive, but a false witness pours out lies. The mocker seeks wisdom and finds none, but knowledge comes easily to the discerning.

Stay away from a fool, for you will not find knowledge on their lips. The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception. Fools mock at making amends for sin, but goodwill is found among the upright. Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy. The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish.

There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death. Even in laughter the heart may ache, and rejoicing may end in grief. The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways, and the good rewarded for theirs. The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps. The wise fear the LORD and shun evil, but a fool is hotheaded and yet feels secure. **Proverbs 14:1-16 NIV**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Which truth statement above do you love the most?

Which truth statement above concerns you the most?

What do we learn about God in these Scriptures?

What do we learn about people in these Scriptures?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, it is a humbling privilege to be given access to your wisdom. I recognize that wisdom is only helpful if it is embraced. Come alongside me today and empower me to live it out!

DAY 5 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

How important is it to you to build your life on a solid foundation?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

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

Proverbs 1:7 NIV

There are six things the LORD hates—no, seven things he detests: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord in a family. **Proverbs 6:16-19 NLT**

Jesus said, “Dear friends, don’t be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot do any more to you after that. But I’ll tell you whom to fear. Fear God, who has the power to kill you and then throw you into hell. Yes, he’s the one to fear.

“What is the price of five sparrows—two copper coins? Yet God does not forget a single one of them. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows. **Luke 12:4-7 NLT**

Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30 NLT

Listen as Wisdom calls out! Hear as understanding raises her voice! “I love all who love me. Those who search will surely find me.” **Proverbs 8:1, 17 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Jesus makes the wisdom of GOD *easily accessible* to whomever is humble enough to ask for it. The Bible is clear—our “flesh” (some translate it “sinful nature”) is always at war with the Holy Spirit, and we must choose which we are going to follow. **You have a choice!** And your life outcomes will be determined by that choice.

What area of your life have you been holding onto foolishly that needs a “wisdom of God” upgrade?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, despite my broken pieces, you have made me whole. Despite my sinful choices, you have forgiven and restored me. Thank you for allowing me to shed the weight of my own disastrous power so I can be relieved and take on the gentle and satisfying teaching of Jesus.