



TRUTH!

WISDOM FOR FLOURISHING PEOPLE

SERIES RESOURCES

Truth!: Wisdom for Flourishing

Introduction

In today's passage, we'll take a look at the wisdom that Solomon passes down to his children. By doing this, Solomon models what it looks like to be a wise father-figure.

What is wisdom? Wisdom includes the ability to know what is right and how to avoid what is wrong. Today, we'll learn more about wisdom and what makes it different from just knowing right and wrong. Wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and it produces a quality to our behavior that makes us look like Jesus Christ.

For now, think about a wise father-figure you know, and/or have known. This may be your own father, or someone who acted like a father towards you.

- What made them wise?
- In what way did they teach you wisdom?
- Am I demonstrating this wisdom to my children?

Proverbs 4

In the book of Proverbs, wisdom is like a moral thread that forms the fabric of the universe. This thread has been woven by God, and Solomon encourages his son to pay attention to this weave. Throughout the book of proverbs, Solomon instills practical wisdom, a type of knowledge that is required to live life in the way that God designed it.

Read Proverbs 1:1-9

- How does the metaphor of wisdom as a moral thread woven by God enhance our understanding of its role in the universe?
- In the biblical tradition, where is the primary place we can find wisdom? What difference should that make in our lives?

In the biblical tradition, wisdom is closely related to the virtue of prudence. Prudence is the ability to know what is right and how to avoid what is wrong. In the ancient world, prudence was often considered the "charioteer" of the four cardinal virtues. Just as a

charioteer was needed to drive and direct the horses of a chariot, so too was prudence needed to drive and direct justice, courage, and moderation. Without knowing right and wrong, we cannot pursue justice, act courageously, or act in moderation.

Read Proverbs 1:10-27

- How does Solomon's presentation of wisdom in Proverbs align with the concept of prudence?
- Can you think of examples from your own life where you exercised prudence? How has it helped you to live justly, courageously, or with moderation?

So far, we've learned that wisdom involves practical knowledge, a skill for how to live life well. But when we take a closer look at Scripture, wisdom involves a bit more than just knowing right and wrong.

Read Proverbs 2:6, Proverbs 9:10, and James 1:5

- How does the biblical perspective on the origin of wisdom differ from prudence?
- What implications does this have for how we seek and value wisdom in our lives?
- As Fathers (or as parents), how can we instill wisdom to our children (or to those under and around us)?

While prudence can be developed with some effort and practice, wisdom is not something we grow on our own. Wisdom is a gift from God, and it involves a fear of him. This isn't the type of fear that we have of punishment; rather, it is a reverent fear and respect for God. In both the Old and the New Testament, wisdom is associated with the Holy Spirit.

Read Isaiah 11:2 and 1 Corinthians 2:13-14

- How can we balance the pursuit of practical wisdom with the higher wisdom that comes from following the Holy Spirit?
- To bring things back to fatherhood (or parenthood), how can we model a Spirit-filled life for our children (or, for others around us)?