

An open Bible is shown lying on a wooden surface, with its pages slightly curved. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light green. A teal rectangular overlay is positioned in the upper middle of the image, containing the word 'Proverbs' in a white, elegant cursive font. Below it, the text 'FALL 2017 BIBLE STUDY' is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

Proverbs

FALL 2017 BIBLE STUDY

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The Pathway through a Passage

START WITH PRAYER

STEP 1 TEXT

What does the passage say?

Look at the **words and phrases** for any:

- Repetitions
- Contrasts ☞
- Transition words
- Images/metaphors
- Commands or Promises
- Descriptions of God
- Surprises !
- Theme words from the book

Looking at the **whole passage...**

- What kind of writing is this?
- Story, prayer, poetry, teaching, dialogue, proverb?
- Does it change?
- What tone or feeling is the author trying to communicate?
- How are the ideas grouped?
- Where are the changes of thought?
- Divide the passage into its natural sections, one for each major thought.
- Create a heading or picture for each section and a one sentence summary in your own words.
- What does the structure reveal?
- What is the author's flow of thought?

STEP 2

TRAVELING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

What does the passage mean?

- **In Proverbs:** read passages provided.
- Check the structure diagram to see which part of the book you are in.
- Are there any clues about who the passage has been written by?
- Who it was written to? When? Why?
- **The Whole Bible:** read the passages provided

So what's the main idea of the passage?

STOP TO PRAY

STEP 3

THINKING THROUGH THE GOSPEL

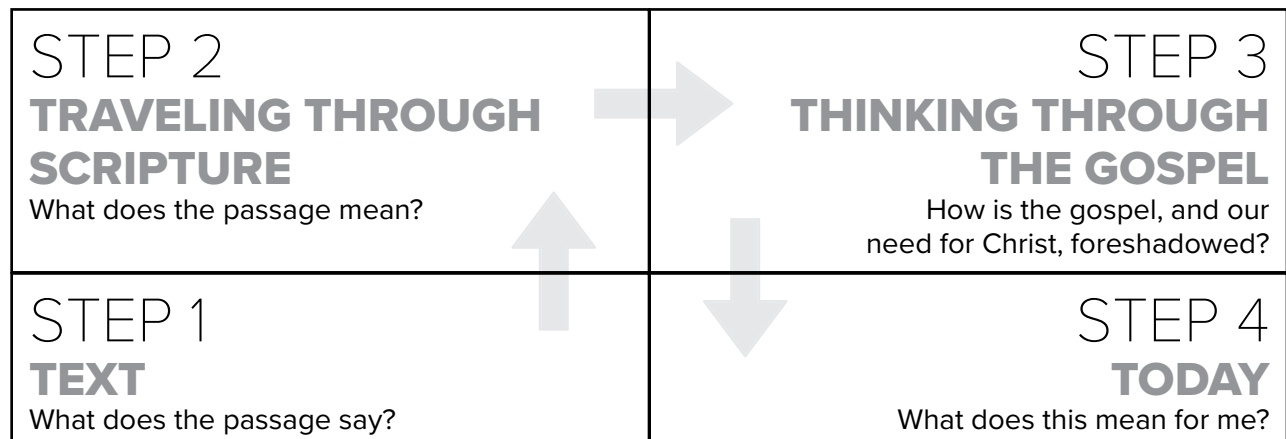
How is the gospel, and our need for Christ, foreshadowed?

STEP 4

TODAY

What does this mean for me?

FINISH IN PRAYER



Introduction to Proverbs

Reading the book of Proverbs is like drinking a glass of clear water on a hot day when you did not realize how thirsty you were. It is unexpected, different, and deeply satisfying. The four so called “wisdom” books in the Old Testament (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and The Song of Solomon) are dangerously practical. They deal with the circumstances of normal everyday life: work, family, finance, leisure, alcohol, speech, and exposing our deep motivations.

In Biblical terms, “wisdom” is not just learned through experience. Wisdom begins, grows, and bears fruit in the fear of the Lord. It requires humility and hunger before the person of God and his word. It requires our acknowledgement that we are not wise, so that we turn to God to fear him in all things, with all our hearts, all our days. The wisdom revealed in Proverbs is relational, not intellectual. If we come to know and love God more deeply the book is achieving its purpose.

The book of Proverbs is an amazing and unique combination. It is not “law” but it is full of commands. It is not “story” but it is full of stories. It is not “prophecy” but the God who revealed himself in the covenant with Israel is working his purposes toward the future fulfillment. It is certainly not advice—of the “haste makes waste” variety, though it captures 375 of Solomon’s pithy proverbs (e.g. ‘Whoever blesses his neighbor with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, will be counted as cursing.’ Proverbs 27:14). The book is not a random string of pearls, but a series of collections gathered carefully together, and as such context is important.

As it is not always easy to see the patterns in either the proverbs or through the book, the basic structure of the book is helpful to know.

Chapters 1 – 9	How to read the book of Proverbs: the key is the fear of the Lord
Chapters 10-29	The Proverbs of Solomon (with Sayings of the Wise 22:17-24:34)
Chapter 30	The Sayings of Agur
Chapter 31	The Sayings of Lemuel

Proverbs deepens and develops the basic categories of life and faith, on which the rest of Scripture builds. As such it offers unique paths to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in whom all the wisdom of God dwells.

Structure of Proverbs

(From How to Read the Bible Book by Book by Gordon Fee)

1:1-7	Introduction
1:8-9:18	Prologue: Poems of Instruction Lesson 1 and Interlude 1 - Warning and Rebuke (1:8-33) Lesson 2 - Safeguard against Wisdom (2:1-22) Lesson 3 & 4 - Value of Wisdom (3:1-35) Lessons 5-7 - Supremacy of Wisdom (4:1-27) Lesson 8 - Warnings against adultery, folly, and wickedness (5:1-6:19) Lesson 9 - Further wisdom against adultery (6:20-35) Lesson 10 and Interlude 2 - The unfaithful wife, Wisdom's call (7:1-8:36) Epilogue - The rival banquets of Wisdom and Folly (9:1-18)
10:1-22:16	Proverbs of Solomon 1 Part 1 (10:1-15:29) Part 2 (15:30-22:16)
22:17-24:34	Sayings of the Wise First collection (22:17-24:22) Second collection (24:22-34)
25:1-29:27	Proverbs of Solomon 2 Part 1 (25:1-27:27) Part 2 (28:1-29:27)
30:1-31:31	More Sayings of the Wise Agur (30:1-33) Lemuel (31:1-9)
31:10-31	Epilogue: The Ideal Wife

Study 1: The Hinge for Life Proverbs 1:1-19

PRAY

Ask God to help you listen to his voice as you read and study.

Read the passage.

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.

8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction,

and forsake not your mother's teaching,

9 for they are a graceful garland for your head

and pendants for your neck.

10 My son, if sinners entice you,

do not consent.

11 If they say, “Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood;
let us ambush the innocent without reason;
12 like Sheol let us swallow them alive,
and whole, like those who go down to the pit;
13 we shall find all precious goods,
we shall fill our houses with plunder;
14 throw in your lot among us;
we will all have one purse”—
15 my son, do not walk in the way with them;
hold back your foot from their paths,
16 for their feet run to evil,
and they make haste to shed blood.
17 For in vain is a net spread
in the sight of any bird,
18 but these men lie in wait for their own blood;
they set an ambush for their own lives.
19 Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain;
it takes away the life of its possessors.

STEP 1

TEXT

What does it say?

1. Look at the words and phrases. Use the [bookmark page provided](#) to help you mark what you notice.

Theme words from the book to look for in this passage – eg. wisdom, righteousness, fool, fear of the LORD, path and way, wickedness.

Are there any words you don't understand? Check the glossary on page 45 or try reading another translation.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share something you noticed, and how it impacts what is being said in the text.

2. Look at the whole passage. Use the [bookmark page provided](#) to help you further explore what is being said.

Divide the passage into its natural sections, one for each major thought. Create a heading or picture for each section and a one sentence summary in your own words.

What does the structure reveal? What is the author's flow of thought?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Have a couple of people share their breakdown and headings.

STEP 2

TRAVELING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

What does it mean?

Use the bookmark provided to help guide you through the bigger Bible context – looking to deepen your understanding of what the passage means.

3. In Proverbs: read 1:20-2:1-15

4. The whole Bible: The name for God, the “LORD” has deep Biblical significance (See Exodus 3:13-17, Deuteronomy 6:20-25), and the “Fear of the LORD” is a key phrase in our passage and the whole book of Proverbs. Take some time to track the ways this phrase is used in other books collectively called “Wisdom Literature”.

Proverbs 3:7-8, 8:13, 9:10, 14:26-27, 15:33
Ecclesiastes 12:13
Job 28:23-28

What do these references teach us this phrase means (and does NOT mean)?

*If you still have questions about the passage write them down to discuss with your group.
If you wish to use a commentary now is the time to do so.*

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how looking at the bigger Bible context has helped you understand the meaning of this passage. Give one particular example.

So what's the BIG IDEA? What is this passage all about?
Write it down in your words in 1-2 sentences.

BIG IDEA

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your big idea. Work together on it!

PRAY

Pause for prayer. Thank God for all he has already revealed to you, and ask him to help you see him more clearly, and love him more deeply through the next steps of your study.

STEP 3

THINKING THROUGH THE GOSPEL

How is the gospel, and our need for Christ, foreshadowed?

5. According to Proverbs 1:1-19 what did it look like to live as God's Old Covenant people?

6. Romans 3:10-18 begins by telling us "None is righteous, no, not one; and concludes with "There is no fear of God before their eyes". How does this diagnosis of all people change our approach to the call to "fear the LORD"?

STEP 4

TODAY

What does this mean for me?

Reflecting on the big idea of the passage, and your life in Christ:

7. What will it mean for you to more fully live “fearing the LORD?”

8. What do you desire God to change in you in the light of this passage?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your thoughts on these questions.

9. What are you going to remember from this passage? Ask for prayer for?
This should be practical and personal.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

As you are able, share your prayer point and ask for prayer. Remember to check in with one another in subsequent weeks for ongoing encouragement and prayer.

Study 2: The Big Decision Proverbs 3:1-12

PRAY

Ask God to help you listen to his voice as you read and study.

Read the passage.

- 3:1 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.
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.
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.
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.

STEP 1

TEXT

What does it say?

1. Look at the **words and phrases**. Use the bookmark page provided to help you mark what you notice.

Theme words from the book to look for in this passage – teaching words, faithfulness, heart, turning, fear of the LORD, paths.

Are there any words you don't understand? Check the glossary on page 45 or try reading another translation.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share something you noticed, and how it impacts what is being said in the text.

2. Look at the **whole passage**. Use the bookmark page provided to help you further explore what is being said.

Divide the passage into its natural sections, one for each major thought. Create a heading or picture for each section and a one sentence summary in your own words.

What does the structure reveal? What is the author's flow of thought?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Have a couple of people share their breakdown and headings.

STEP 2

TRAVELING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

What does it mean?

Use the [bookmark provided](#) to help guide you through the bigger Bible context – looking to deepen your understanding of what the passage means.

3. In Proverbs: Read Ch 2 and 4:4b-9. What more do we learn about what it means to “Trust the Lord with all your heart”? Why is leaning on your own understanding such a problem?

Read Proverbs 5:21-23, 6:23, 10:17, 12:1. Why does God discipline/reprove those whom he loves? What does Proverbs say our posture to God’s discipline must be? Why?

4. The whole Bible: The instructions given here by the Father to the Son are actually the passing on of instructions given by God to his people throughout scripture. Read Deut:6:4-9 and 30:15-20. How does this deepen your understanding of what is being said here?

*If you still have questions about the passage write them down to discuss with your group.
If you wish to use a commentary now is the time to do so.*

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how looking at the bigger Bible context has helped you understand the meaning of this passage. Give one particular example.

So what's the BIG IDEA? What is this passage all about?
Write it down in your words in 1-2 sentences.

BIG IDEA

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your big idea. Work together on it!

Pause for prayer. Thank God for all he has already revealed to you, and ask him to help you see him more clearly, and love him more deeply through the next steps of your study.

PRAY

STEP 3

THINKING THROUGH THE GOSPEL

How is the gospel, and our need for Christ, foreshadowed?

Read Hebrews 12:1-7.

5. Why do you think these verses from Proverbs 3:11-12 are quoted as an encouragement not to grow weary in our struggle against sin?

6. How does looking to Jesus and considering him, rather than ourselves, enable us to seek God's wisdom with all our hearts?

STEP 4

TODAY What does this mean for me?

Reflecting on the big idea of the passage, and your life in Christ:

7. Where in your life are you struggling to trust in the Lord with all your heart? Where might you be struggling to accept his loving discipline?

8. How does this passage encourage you in seeking to follow Jesus with all your heart, in all your life?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your thoughts on these questions.

9. What are you going to remember from this passage? Ask for prayer for?
This should be practical and personal.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

As you are able, share your prayer point and ask for prayer. Remember to check in with one another in subsequent weeks for ongoing encouragement and prayer.

Study 3: Woman Folly Proverbs 7

PRAY

Ask God to help you listen to his voice as you read and study.

Read the passage.

7:1 My son, keep my words
and treasure up my commandments with you;
2 keep my commandments and live;
keep my teaching as the apple of your eye;
3 bind them on your fingers;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,”
and call insight your intimate friend,
5 to keep you from the forbidden woman,
from the adulteress with her smooth words.
6 For at the window of my house
I have looked out through my lattice,
7 and I have seen among the simple,
I have perceived among the youths,
a young man lacking sense,
8 passing along the street near her corner,
taking the road to her house
9 in the twilight, in the evening,
at the time of night and darkness.
10 And behold, the woman meets him,
dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart.
11 She is loud and wayward;
her feet do not stay at home;
12 now in the street, now in the market,
and at every corner she lies in wait.

13 She seizes him and kisses him,
and with bold face she says to him,
14 “I had to offer sacrifices,
and today I have paid my vows;
15 so now I have come out to meet you,
to seek you eagerly, and I have found you.
16 I have spread my couch with coverings,
colored linens from Egyptian linen;
17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh,
aloes, and cinnamon.
18 Come, let us take our fill of love till morning;
let us delight ourselves with love.
19 For my husband is not at home;
he has gone on a long journey;
20 he took a bag of money with him;
at full moon he will come home.”
21 With much seductive speech she persuades him;
with her smooth talk she compels him.
22 All at once he follows her,
as an ox goes to the slaughter,
or as a stag is caught fast
23 till an arrow pierces its liver;
as a bird rushes into a snare;
he does not know that it will cost him his life.
24 And now, O sons, listen to me,
and be attentive to the words of my mouth.
25 Let not your heart turn aside to her ways;
do not stray into her paths,
26 for many a victim has she laid low,
and all her slain are a mighty throng.
27 Her house is the way to Sheol,
going down to the chambers of death

STEP 1

TEXT

What does it say?

1. Look at the **words and phrases**. Use the bookmark page provided to help you mark what you notice.

Theme words from the book to look for in this passage – commandments, my Son, wisdom, life, death, keep, listen, treasure

Are there any words you don't understand? Check the glossary on page 45 or try reading another translation.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share something you noticed, and how it impacts what is being said in the text.

2. Look at the **whole passage**. Use the bookmark page provided to help you further explore what is being said.

Divide the passage into its natural sections, one for each major thought. Create a heading or picture for each section and a one sentence summary in your own words.

What does the structure reveal? What is the author's flow of thought?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Have a couple of people share their breakdown and headings.

STEP 2

TRAVELING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

What does it mean?

Use the [bookmark provided](#) to help guide you through the bigger Bible context – looking to deepen your understanding of what the passage means.

3. In Proverbs: read 5:1-6:35, 9:13-18

4. The whole Bible: read Genesis 3:1-13. What similarities do you see between the words of the serpent and Woman Folly?

*If you still have questions about the passage write them down to discuss with your group.
If you wish to use a commentary now is the time to do so.*

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how looking at the bigger Bible context has helped you understand the meaning of this passage. Give one particular example.

So what's the BIG IDEA? What is this passage all about?
Write it down in your words in 1-2 sentences.

BIG IDEA

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your big idea. Work together on it!

Pause for prayer. Thank God for all he has already revealed to you, and ask him to help you see him more clearly, and love him more deeply through the next steps of your study.

PRAY

STEP 3

THINKING THROUGH THE GOSPEL

How is the gospel, and our need for Christ, foreshadowed?

5. Thinking back to Genesis 3, what deep desire does Woman Folly manipulate to tempt the young man to sin? (hint: it's not just sexual temptation!) How does Jesus' death and resurrection fulfill this desire?

6. What does the Father say to his Son is protection against folly? How is he protected?

STEP 4

TODAY

What does this mean for me?

Reflecting on the big idea of the passage, and your life in Christ:

7. What “prescription” is given here to prevent being led astray by Woman Folly?

8. How does this expand your understanding of what it looks like to live life in Christ?

9. Where in your life do you need to repent and ask for God’s help?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how the passage has shaped your perspective on what it looks like to live for Christ.

10. What are you going to remember from this passage? Ask prayer for? This should be practical and personal.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

As you are able, share your prayer point and ask for prayer. Remember to check in with one another in subsequent weeks for ongoing encouragement and prayer.

Study 4: Woman Wisdom Proverbs 9

PRAY

Ask God to help you listen to his voice as you read and study.

Read the passage.

- 9:1 Wisdom has built her house;
she has hewn her seven pillars.
- 2 She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
- 3 She has sent out her young women to call
from the highest places in the town,
- 4 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”
To him who lacks sense she says,
- 5 “Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.
- 6 Leave your simple ways, and live,
and walk in the way of insight.”
- 7 Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse,
and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury.
- 8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;
reprove a wise man, and he will love you.
- 9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;
teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.
- 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.
- 11 For by me your days will be multiplied,
and years will be added to your life.
- 12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself;
if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

13 The woman Folly is loud;
she is seductive and knows nothing.

14 She sits at the door of her house;
she takes a seat on the highest places of the town,

15 calling to those who pass by,
who are going straight on their way,

16 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”
And to him who lacks sense she says,

17 “Stolen water is sweet,
and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”

18 But he does not know that the dead are there,
that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

STEP 1

TEXT

What does it say?

1. Look at the **words and phrases.** Use the bookmark page provided to help you mark what you notice.

Theme words from the book to look for in this passage – fear of the LORD, wisdom/folly, life/death, knowledge, and insight.

Are there any words you don't understand? Check the glossary on page 45 or try reading another translation.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share something you noticed, and how it impacts what is being said in the text.

2. Look at the **whole passage.** Use the bookmark page provided to help you further explore what is being said.

Divide the passage into its natural sections, one for each major thought. Create a heading or picture for each section and a one sentence summary in your own words.

What does the structure reveal? What is the author's flow of thought?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Have a couple of people share their breakdown and headings.

STEP 2

TRAVELING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

What does it mean?

Use the [bookmark provided](#) to help guide you through the bigger Bible context – looking to deepen your understanding of what the passage means.

3. In Proverbs: read 8:22-31. How do these verses expand your understanding of both the source and the authority of wisdom?

Proverbs big theme of the fear of the LORD as the beginning of wisdom is at the heart of this chapter (9:10). How does that shape how you will 'listen and hear' the proverbs in the following section of this book?

4. The whole Bible: read Isaiah 55:1-9. Notice that the desire of the LORD's heart for his people has always been for wisdom and blessing.

*If you still have questions about the passage write them down to discuss with your group.
If you wish to use a commentary now is the time to do so.*

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how looking at the bigger Bible context has helped you understand the meaning of this passage. Give one particular example.

So what's the BIG IDEA? What is this passage all about?
Write it down in your words in 1-2 sentences.

BIG IDEA

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your big idea. Work together on it!

Pause for prayer. Thank God for all he has already revealed to you, and ask him to help you see him more clearly, and love him more deeply through the next steps of your study.

PRAY

STEP 3

THINKING THROUGH THE GOSPEL

How is the gospel, and our need for Christ, foreshadowed?

5. Read Colossians 1:15-16 and 1 Corin. 1:21-24, 30. In the light of 8:22-31, how do these NT passages grow your understanding of Jesus as the fulfillment of the OT, and help you develop an authentic Christ-centered view of wisdom?

STEP 4

TODAY

What does this mean for me?

Reflecting on the big idea of the passage, and your life in Christ:

6. What are the lessons of Woman Wisdom that can equip you for serving Christ and building up his church?

7. Although the call of Woman Wisdom and Woman Folly are contrasted, we see that Folly also mimics Wisdom in these verses (vv.1-6 and vv.13-18). Are there specific ways that you've found yourself 'fooled' and drawn in by worldly wisdom? How?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how the passage has shaped your perspective on what it looks like to live for Christ.

8. What are you going to remember from this passage? Ask for prayer for? This should be practical and personal.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

As you are able, share your prayer point and ask for prayer. Remember to check in with one another in subsequent weeks for ongoing encouragement and prayer.

Study 5: Two Currencies Proverbs 27:23-28:28

PRAY

Ask God to help you listen to his voice as you read and study.

Read the passage.

- 27:23 Know well the condition of your flocks,
and give attention to your herds,
- 24 for riches do not last forever;
and does a crown endure to all generations?
- 25 When the grass is gone and the new growth appears
and the vegetation of the mountains is gathered,
- 26 the lambs will provide your clothing,
and the goats the price of a field.
- 27 There will be enough goats' milk for your food,
for the food of your household
and maintenance for your girls.
- 28:1 The wicked flee when no one pursues,
but the righteous are bold as a lion.
- 2 When a land transgresses, it has many rulers,
but with a man of understanding and knowledge,
its stability will long continue.
- 3 A poor man who oppresses the poor
is a beating rain that leaves no food.
- 4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked,
but those who keep the law strive against them.
- 5 Evil men do not understand justice,
but those who seek the LORD understand it completely.
- 6 Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity
than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.

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- 7 The one who keeps the law is a son with understanding,
but a companion of gluttons shames his father.
- 8 Whoever multiplies his wealth by interest and profit
gathers it for him who is generous to the poor.
- 9 If one turns away his ear from hearing the law,
even his prayer is an abomination.
- 10 Whoever misleads the upright into an evil way
will fall into his own pit,
but the blameless will have a goodly inheritance.
- 11 A rich man is wise in his own eyes,
but a poor man who has understanding will find him out.
- 12 When the righteous triumph, there is great glory,
but when the wicked rise, people hide themselves.
- 13 Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.
- 14 Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always,
but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.
- 15 Like a roaring lion or a charging bear
is a wicked ruler over a poor people.
- 16 A ruler who lacks understanding is a cruel oppressor,
but he who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.
- 17 If one is burdened with the blood of another,
he will be a fugitive until death;
let no one help him.
- 18 Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered,
but he who is crooked in his ways will suddenly fall.
- 19 Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread,
but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.

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- 20 A faithful man will abound with blessings,
but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.
- 21 To show partiality is not good,
but for a piece of bread a man will do wrong.
- 22 A stingy man hastens after wealth
and does not know that poverty will come upon him.
- 23 Whoever rebukes a man will afterward find more favor
than he who flatters with his tongue.
- 24 Whoever robs his father or his mother
and says, “That is no transgression,”
is a companion to a man who destroys.
- 25 A greedy man stirs up strife,
but the one who trusts in the LORD will be enriched.
- 26 Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool,
but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.
- 27 Whoever gives to the poor will not want,
but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse.
- 28 When the wicked rise, people hide themselves,
but when they perish, the righteous increase.

STEP 1

TEXT

What does it say?

1. Look at the **words and phrases**. Use the [bookmark page provided](#) to help you mark what you notice.

Theme words from the book to look for in this passage – blessed, wicked, transgressions, righteous, abomination, fear of the LORD, ways, and walks.

Are there any words you don't understand? Check the glossary on page 45 or try reading another translation.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share something you noticed, and how it impacts what is being said in the text.

2. Look at the **whole passage**. Use the bookmark page provided to help you further explore what is being said.

In this part of Proverbs rather than breaking up the text into smaller parts, it will be more helpful to gather different themes together. Marking them in different colours will help you do this. Sometimes noticing where things are placed in a passage will help with seeing a key idea for the author.

Create a heading or picture for each topic and a one sentence summary in your own words.

Are there key verses that reveal the main emphasis in this passage?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Have a couple of people share their theme gatherings and headings.

STEP 2

TRAVELING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

What does it mean?

Use the bookmark provided to help guide you through the bigger Bible context – looking to deepen your understanding of what the passage means.

3. In Proverbs: read 3:5-18, 11:4

4. The whole Bible: read Psalm 49, Mark 8:34-38, Luke 12:13-34, Matthew 6:19-24

*If you still have questions about the passage write them down to discuss with your group.
If you wish to use a commentary now is the time to do so.*

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how looking at the bigger Bible context has helped you understand the meaning of this passage. Give one particular example.

So what's the BIG IDEA? What is this passage all about?
Write it down in your words in 1-2 sentences.

BIG IDEA

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your big idea. Work together on it!

PRAY

Pause for prayer. Thank God for all he has already revealed to you, and ask him to help you see him more clearly, and love him more deeply through the next steps of your study.

STEP 3

THINKING THROUGH THE GOSPEL

How is the gospel, and our need for Christ, foreshadowed?

5. How does the gospel of Christ crucified “who though he was rich, for your sakes became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9) transform what you treasure and how you think about wealth?

6. In 1 Timothy 6:6-19 Paul gives in new Christians instructions regarding money and contentment. What do we learn here?

STEP 4

TODAY

What does this mean for me?

Reflecting on the big idea of the passage, and your life in Christ:

7. Proverbs has a great deal to teach us about what true wealth looks like. It also teaches that once we get what we treasure clear, lots of practical things follow. This means there is a great deal of practical wisdom about planning, wise work, saving and generosity that is very helpful. This may be a thread you want to pursue further in Proverbs by noting verses that deal with this area of life. (Some of these are gathered in the Glossary for you)

8. What have been some of the things God has spoken to you about in this area through your reading of Proverbs so far? What do you want to repent of and turn away from? Need to do?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how the passage has shaped your perspective on what it looks like to live for Christ.

9. What are you going to remember from this passage? Ask for prayer for?
This should be practical and personal.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

As you are able, share your prayer point and ask for prayer. Remember to check in with one another in subsequent weeks for ongoing encouragement and prayer.

Study 6: Wisdom with our Words Proverbs 12

PRAY

Ask God to help you listen to his voice as you read and study.

Read the passage.

- 1 Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,
but he who hates reproof is stupid.
- 2 A good man obtains favor from the LORD,
but a man of evil devices he condemns.
- 3 No one is established by wickedness,
but the root of the righteous will never be moved.
- 4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband,
but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.
- 5 The thoughts of the righteous are just;
the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.
- 6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood,
but the mouth of the upright delivers them.
- 7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more,
but the house of the righteous will stand.
- 8 A man is commended according to his good sense,
but one of twisted mind is despised.
- 9 Better to be lowly and have a servant
than to play the great man and lack bread.
- 10 Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast,
but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.
- 11 Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread,
but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.
- 12 Whoever is wicked covets the spoil of evildoers,
but the root of the righteous bears fruit.
- 13 An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips,
but the righteous escapes from trouble.

14 From the fruit of his mouth a man is satisfied with good,
and the work of a man's hand comes back to him.

15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,
but a wise man listens to advice.

16 The vexation of a fool is known at once,
but the prudent ignores an insult.

17 Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence,
but a false witness utters deceit.

18 There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

19 Truthful lips endure forever,
but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil,
but those who plan peace have joy.

21 No ill befalls the righteous,
but the wicked are filled with trouble.

22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD,
but those who act faithfully are his delight.

23 A prudent man conceals knowledge,
but the heart of fools proclaims folly.

24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
while the slothful will be put to forced labor.

25 Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down,
but a good word makes him glad.

26 One who is righteous is a guide to his neighbor,
but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

27 Whoever is slothful will not roast his game,
but the diligent man will get precious wealth.

28 In the path of righteousness is life,
and in its pathway there is no death.

STEP 1

TEXT

What does it say?

1. Look at the words and phrases. Use the [bookmark page provided](#) to help you mark what you notice.

Theme words from the book to look for in this passage – righteous/wicked, discipline, humility, speech, words, life/death

Are there any words you don't understand? Check the glossary on page 45 or try reading another translation.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share something you noticed, and how it impacts what is being said in the text.

2. Look at the whole passage. Use the [bookmark page provided](#) to help you further explore what is being said.

In this part of Proverbs rather than breaking up the text into smaller parts, it will be more helpful to gather different themes together. Marking them in different colours will help you do this. Sometimes noticing where things are placed in a passage will help with seeing a key idea for the author.

Then create a heading or picture for each topic and a one sentence summary in your own words.

Are there key verses that reveal the main emphasis in this passage?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Have a couple of people share their theme gatherings and headings.

STEP 2

TRAVELING THROUGH SCRIPTURE

What does it mean?

Use the bookmark provided to help guide you through the bigger Bible context – looking to deepen your understanding of what the passage means.

3. In Proverbs: read 11:9-14 and 16:20-28 for added teaching on wise speech.

4. The whole Bible: read James: 1:19-20 and 3:13-18. What do these passages add to your understanding of the wise use of the tongue and wisdom in general?

*If you still have questions about the passage write them down to discuss with your group.
If you wish to use a commentary now is the time to do so.*

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how looking at the bigger Bible context has helped you understand the meaning of this passage. Give one particular example.

So what's the BIG IDEA? What is this passage all about?
Write it down in your words in 1-2 sentences.

BIG IDEA

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share your big idea. Work together on it!

PRAY

Pause for prayer. Thank God for all he has already revealed to you, and ask him to help you see him more clearly, and love him more deeply through the next steps of your study.

STEP 3

THINKING THROUGH THE GOSPEL

How is the gospel, and our need for Christ, foreshadowed?

5. Take particular notice of the characteristics and results of the speech of both the righteous and the wicked. How does this highlight our need of Christ? (Recall James 3:13-18).

STEP 4

TODAY

What does this mean for me?

Reflecting on the big idea of the passage, and your life in Christ:

6. Has this passage made you more thoughtful about how you listen and speak? In what way?

7. From the many truths seen in this passage, which most encourages you to live as one who is righteous?

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

Share how the passage has shaped your perspective on what it looks like to live for Christ.

8. What are you going to remember from this passage? Ask for prayer for?
This should be practical and personal.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

As you are able, share your prayer point and ask for prayer. Remember to check in with one another in subsequent weeks for ongoing encouragement and prayer.

Glossary For Proverbs

Abomination	Revulsion. The LORD is personally grieved and stirred to action in response to things that are evil and wicked, particularly in our relationships with others. See 6:16-19 (7 things the Lord hates that are repeated and explored throughout all of Proverbs).
Blessing	Blessing is God's original creation intention for all the good he wanted to share with all people - living life inside the boundaries He spoke and shaped into creation (Genesis 1 and 2) but was lost in Genesis 3 ("curse"). The story of the bible is how God restores us to his blessing, ultimately by his son becoming a curse for us. 3:3-18, 8:32-36, 16:20, 28:14.
Fear of the LORD	Describes the appropriate response of humankind to the God who has created and redeemed his people. It carries the idea of reverent awe and submissive faith, in an encounter with the LORD God of Israel. It is responding to God's revelation and turning from all evil.
Reproof	Correction, rebuke. Proverbs speaks often of the wise person taking reproof with an attitude of humility and the fear of the LORD, which Proverbs tells us leads to life. (15:31-33)
Righteousness	The righteous person is in right relationship with God. This does not mean sinless or perfect, but faithful to the covenant God made with his people Israel. In God's plan, Christ offers covenant membership to all who believe the gospel. (Romans 10:3-4)
Sheol	The place of the dead, the grave: not the same as "hell". Common in the OT is the idea of 'going down to Sheol' (Gen. 37:35, Ps. 6:5, 9:17). God is the one who raises one up from Sheol (Ps. 30:3), demonstrating his authority over the dead as well as the living.
Steadfast love	Refers to the unchanging, faithful love for his people that the LORD God demonstrates in fulfilling his covenant promises. He declared it to be a central part of his character when revealing his glory to Moses (Exodus 34:6).
Transgression	A violation of a law, command or duty.
Wickedness	The quality of being evil or morally wrong. In Proverbs, the benefits of the righteous (the wise) are often contrasted with the misfortunes of the wicked (fools)...righteousness leading to life, wickedness leading to death (10:16).
Wisdom	The agent by which God creates and sustains his world. The New Testament speaks of Christ as 'the power of God and the wisdom of God' (1 Corin. 1:24), underlying the idea that the power and wisdom of God find their fullest expression in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
Wealth, work and generosity	3:9-10, 10:4-5, 11:24-28, 12:27, 13:11,22-23, 14:23, 20:13-17, 21:5-6,13, 22:1-2,16, 22:22-28, 23:4-8, 27:23-27, 28:19-27, 31:13-25

