

Sermon-Based Small Group Bible Study

Practical Wisdom: An Invitation to God's Wisdom (Proverbs 1:1–7)

Open

Select one of these “ice breakers” to get the conversation going toward the study.

- In elementary school what was your role? Were you the class brain? The class clown? The pleaser? The teacher's pet? The rebel? The wallflower? Something else?
- Who was your hero as a kid? Who is your hero now? What do you admire about them?
- Don't be modest: what is something you're good at, a skill you enjoy sharing with other people?

Dig

After reading Proverbs 1:1–7 together, discuss these questions.

1. The term “wisdom” in this passage names not just thoughts or ideas but actions that people take. How does that make you feel? Empowered? Intimidated? Challenged? Discouraged?
2. “Instruction” in this passage refers to learning by correction, like discipline from a parent. What is your reaction to that idea? Confidence? Fear? Encouragement? Regret?
3. “Righteousness, justice, and equity” describe an ideal society? How have you seen God's wisdom make people's lives better? In what areas would you like to see more of that positive impact?
4. Verse 4 acknowledges that we are at different stages in our wisdom journey. In what areas do you recognize you have gained some wisdom? In what areas do you still feel like you are “simple” or “a youth”?
5. Verse 7 gives the theme of the book of Proverbs, declaring that our true knowledge and wisdom begin when we submit to almighty God. What do you see in lives submitted to God that looks like true knowledge and wisdom?

Summary: God's wisdom is available to all who submit to him. It changes the way we live moment by moment. Acquiring it and living by it is a never-ending journey. And it is never too late to (re)start the journey.

Reflect

Use any of these prompts to encourage group members to apply the text to their own experiences.

- Name a person you have known personally who exemplifies God's wisdom for you. How do you think that person acquired that wisdom?
- In what area do you feel most in need of wisdom right now, whether a specific problem or a general part of life?
- What steps can you commit to in the new year to acquire God's wisdom more readily? These might include following a Bible reading plan, meeting with a mentor or mentee, praying for wisdom regularly, etc.

Pray

Invite the group to pray together using any of these suggestions.

- What needs have you heard from others in the group that we can pray about?
- How can we pray for you about the wisdom you need?
- What injustice or foolishness in the world at large is especially painful to you right now? Let's pray as specifically as we can for God's wisdom to overcome that in people's lives.