

Sermon-Based Small Group Bible Study

Practical Wisdom: The “More” of God’s Wisdom (Proverbs 1:20–33)

Open

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

- What’s the busiest, most crowded place you can remember? What was that experience like for you?
- Recall a time when someone was annoyingly persistent with you, would not take no for an answer. How did that turn out?
- What was something your parents warned you about when you were a kid? What do you think of that warning now?

Dig

After reading Proverbs 1:20–33 together, discuss these questions.

1. Looking at verses 20–21, imagine yourself living in Israel in Old Testament times. What are some of the voices you hear in public places besides God’s wisdom? How do you think those compare to voices today?
2. Verse 22 mentions “simple ones” (those who are inexperienced and ignorant), “scoffers” (those who are cynical and self-confident), and “fools” (those who live as if God is not present or involved). What danger do you see in each category? How do you think God’s wisdom might “break through” to each?
3. Verses 24–31 are a vivid warning of the judgments that come for those who reject God’s wisdom. What parts do you find most frightening here? What parts are most tragic?
4. Verses 32–33 summarize the entire text. What contrasts do you see here? What do they tell you about God’s wisdom? About the human condition? About yourself?

Summary: God makes his wisdom freely available to all. But we humans tend to persist stubbornly in our ignorance and selfishness. The consequences of our foolishness come to us repeatedly. Each is a reminder of our need for God’s wisdom. Each is a warning of the finality of judgment to come, a warning God in his mercy repeatedly gives us, which we must urgently heed.

Reflect

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

- What is a voice you need to listen to less so you will listen to God’s wisdom more?
- Name a practice to which you can commit so that you can listen to God’s wisdom more consistently. (Ideas can include cultivating mentoring friendships, building a habit of personal Bible study and prayer, being more consistent in small group or worship, joining a class, taking time to meditate on God’s word in quiet, etc.)
- Look again at verse 22 for the three kinds of people who reject God’s wisdom. Which one most closely describes you? What step can you take to overcome that tendency?

Pray

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

- What issues of our own stubbornness are we facing, and how can we ask God for his help with those?
- What needs have you heard from others in the group that we can pray about?
- What aspect of God's wisdom makes you thankful right now? Let's give thanks for those.