

# Sample Study

# Proverbs 1-9

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**Read - Pro. 2:1-3:35; other references as given.**

The grand plans we announce to others are not as important as the daily decisions we make. For it is the daily decisions – sometimes small and apparently insignificant – that will often dictate our future.

One life-changing decision many Christians have made is to take time daily to study God's Word and pray. But there are many who have struggled for years to establish a personal time with God and His Word. In this lesson you will discover the essential keys to effective personal Bible Study.

Before you begin, ask God to reveal Himself to you through His Word and to give you the faith to bring your life into accord with His will. May God bless your diligent study of His Word.

1. The first nine chapters of Proverbs are a series of sermons or fatherly talks to his son and other children. The first use of the phrase "my son" (Pro. 1:8) identifies the beginning of the first sermon or talk. The frequent use of the phrase "my son" (cf. Pro. 3:11, 3:21, 4:10, 4:20, 5:1, 6:1, 6:3, 6:20, 7:1) makes it clear that the father longs to have his son embrace the path of wisdom.
  - a. What *do you think* are the words and commandments that the father refers to in Pro. 2:1?
  - b. Why *do you think* the father would refer to wisdom as **my words** and **my commandments** if all wisdom comes from God (Pro. 2:1)?
2. The word **treasure** (Pro. 2:1, KJV - hide, NIV - store up) teaches the first essential spiritual truth that every Christian must understand before he can acquire the wisdom of God. What is this truth?
3. Do you think the words **ear**, **heart**, and **voice** (Pro. 2:2, 3) represent various religious duties (e.g., listening, meditating on Scripture, praying) which must be done to acquire wisdom or is the writer simply saying that man's total being must become fully engaged in this endeavor (Pro. 2:2-4)?
4.
  - a. There is an important two-word phrase that is repeated three times in Pro. 2:1-4. The repetition of this phrase helps us understand another essential key to gaining the wisdom of God. What is it?
  - b. What *do you think* the repetition of this phrase (if you) teaches about the acquisition of wisdom?
5. Silver is not considered as precious a metal as gold in the Western World. However, in the Old Testament silver is mentioned before gold (except for Deuteronomy and Chronicles), indicating its superior value to the ancient Israelites. It was also considered a standard for business transactions and weighed out for payment of purchases and wages. Restate Proverbs 2:4 in your own words, substituting two modern words for silver and hidden treasures or gold.

6. There are eight disciplines or spiritual commitments that must be made before a believer can truly acquire the knowledge of God (Pro. 2:1-4). The knowledge referred to in this passage is not related to salvation but rather to the practical wisdom that enables a believer to comprehend God's continuing plan for abundant living. In salvation man is the recipient of God's free gift of eternal life (cf. Ro. 6:23). (Note: If you are not sure that you are born again and have received God's free gift of salvation, please turn to "The Final Exam" to learn how you can receive the free gift of salvation.) However, to acquire the wisdom of God, he must diligently pursue God and His revelation. In what way(s) *do you think* understanding the difference between how man is saved and how he gains wisdom should impact your Christian life?
  
7. After listing the prerequisites for gaining the wisdom of God (Pro. 2:1-4), the Biblical passage changes abruptly beginning in Pro. 2:5.
  - a. In what way(s) does the word **then** (vv. 5, 9) affect the promises of blessing in Pro. 2:5-12?
  
  - b. Some view the disciplined study of Biblical truth as an academic pursuit void of real practical benefit. Name at least seven practical benefits gained from the diligent study of God's Word (Pro. 2:5-16).
  
  - c. When we apply ourselves diligently to the pursuit of God's Word (Pro. 2:1-4), knowledge becomes pleasant to our souls (Pro. 2:10). What important truths does this passage teach you about our initial and continuing relationship to wisdom (Pro. 2:1-10)?
  
8. There is an excellent definition of wisdom in the parallelism of Pro. 2:6. What is it?
  
9. If you seek wisdom with all your heart, discretion will preserve and protect you (Pro. 2:11). Discretion includes the ability to evaluate multiple options in life and to choose the best one (Pro. 2:12).
  - a. What two groups or individuals will discretion keep us from being trapped by (Pro. 2:11-16)?
  
  - b. One of the ways that we can discern between the wise and wicked men of this world is by evaluating their speech (cf. Pro. 2:12, 17). Name two speech patterns of ungodly people that will indicate that they do not follow the path of uprightness (Pro. 2:12-16).
  
  - c. List some examples of ungodly or perverse speech that you have listened to in the past three months.
  
  - d. What personal spiritual decisions have you made to avoid this contamination?
  
10. In Pro. 2:16-19 we see a vivid example of one whose ways are crooked and who lives in darkness. The strange woman or adulteress (Heb. *Zarah*; Note: The adulteress is representative of all immoral people, both men and women) is estranged from the corporate life of Israel because of her immoral conduct. With what two persons has she broken covenant (Pro. 2:17)?

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1.
  - a. In the immediate context it would include the fatherly admonitions contained in Proverbs 1-9. In the broader context it would include the actual proverbs (Pro. 10:1ff.) and all the godly instruction the father could give to his son throughout his lifetime.
  - b. The father was able to refer to the words and commandments of God as his words and commandments because he had embraced the wisdom of God for himself. When an individual accepts the wisdom of God by faith, the truth becomes his intimate friend and ally. It becomes his in the sense that it becomes part of his thinking, his actions, and his character – they are his words and commandments.
2. The individual must understand that most teaching cannot be used immediately. (Note: Wisdom is a treasure to be stored until it is needed.) Generally some time will pass until an opportunity occurs whereby the wise instruction will be of great benefit. In the interim the wise instruction will help develop beliefs that will produce attitudes and actions that will direct the course of the person's life.
3. While the various individual aspects must be employed in the pursuit of wisdom, it likely means that there must be a passionate pursuit of this noble prize that includes every aspect of man's being.
4.
  - a. "If you ..." The use of the phrase introduces a series of contingencies or qualifying conditions that must be met before an individual can expect to realize the benefits listed in Pro. 2:5ff. The inclusion of these conditions indicates the possibility that at least some Christians may not be willing to exert the spiritual energy necessary to accomplish the task and reap the benefits.
  - b. The repetition of the phrase "if you" highlights the importance and significance of the personal decision each individual must make if he expects to gain God's wisdom. All conditions must be met before the individual can possess the wisdom of God.
5. Answers will vary.
6. Most Christians need to be more diligent in their pursuit of God and his wisdom. This does not mean that they try to live the Christian life in their own power (cf. Gal. 3:1-5). They need to make definite spiritual commitments to pursue God so that He will show additional truth to them. When they know the truth they will be set them free from the corruption in this world and this will enable them to glorify God. Too many believers are "waiting on God" when God has clearly instructed them to pursue Him.
7.
  - a. The word "then" makes the promises for wisdom, discernment, protection from error, etc. conditional. All the conditions stated in Pro. 2:1-4 must be met before the benefits of Pro. 2:5 ff. can be claimed.
  - b. The believer is promised: 1. Understanding of the fear of the Lord (v. 5a). 2. Knowledge of God's plan for man on earth (v. 5b). 3. Wisdom (vv. 6, 10). 4. Divine protection (vv. 7b, 8). 5. A love for God's truth (v. 10b), Discretion (v. 11). 6. Deliverance from evil people (v. 16).
  - c. Man's initial response to God's Word will not necessarily be thrill and excitement. We must pursue God and His Word by faith, knowing God will honor our efforts and will eventually the truth will become pleasant to our souls.
8. Knowledge and understanding. Knowledge is a comprehension of God's truth for daily living. Understanding is the wisdom to apply God's principles for daily living in a consistently prudent manner.
9.
  - a. Wicked men (Pro. 2:12-15, "those who leave the paths of uprightness ...") and immoral women (v. 16).
  - b. Ungodly people often speak perverse things – both words and ideas that are contrary to God (v. 12) and they often celebrate and rejoice over doing evil (v. 14). Immoral people often use flattery and seductive speech to accomplish their sexual objectives (v. 16)
  - c. Answers will vary
  - d. Answers will vary.
10. Her husband and God (v. 17b). (Note: It is interesting that the covenant she made with her husband was before God even though nothing is mentioned about her relationship with God other than she is immoral.)