



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

June 9 - 15

Proverbs 1

Things to Know

See Other Sermons Here

[Click Here to Watch](#)

VBS MAX Simpsonville Volunteers Needed

June 23 -26, 2025 - [Click Here to Volunteer!](#)

VBS MAX Haywood Volunteers Needed

June 23 -26, 2025 - [Click Here to Volunteer!](#)

Gospel Connections and Conversations

[Click Here to report your Gospel Connections & Conversations](#)

Studying God's Word *In Community*

*Reminder. Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.*

Sermon Recap

1. Wisdom doesn't begin in the classroom—it begins in the throne room.

The fear of the Lord is not about getting smarter; it's about getting lower.

Reverence, not reasoning, is the first step to seeing life clearly.

2. God's wisdom isn't just for the young and foolish—it's for the seasoned and humble.

You never graduate from your need for God's instruction. Wisdom is a lifelong pursuit, not a one-time download.

3. Fools reject correction, but the wise lean in when God speaks.

The question is not whether you've made mistakes—but whether you're willing to be taught. Wisdom listens. Pride resists. Worshipful fear obeys.

Discussion Questions

Proverbs 1:2–3 – What does Solomon say wisdom and instruction are meant to produce in us? How does this challenge our modern view of wisdom as merely intellectual?

1. **Proverbs 1:4** – Why do you think Proverbs specifically mentions “giving prudence to the simple” and “knowledge and discretion to the youth”? What does this say about our need for moral formation, especially when we're young?
 2. **Proverbs 1:5** – How does this verse show that even the wise still have something to learn? What are some practical ways we can maintain a teachable spirit?
 3. **Proverbs 1:7a** – What does it mean to “fear the Lord,” and how is that the beginning of knowledge? How does this kind of fear lead to both humility and wisdom?
 4. **Proverbs 1:7b** – According to this verse, what attitude do fools have toward wisdom and instruction? Can you think of a time when resisting correction kept you from growing?
-

Read

Read Proverbs 1 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
-

Scripture

Proverbs 1:1-7

The Beginning of Knowledge

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.

[The Holy Bible, English Standard Version](#). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001
by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

Proverbs 1:1-7

Living on Mission In Community

True wisdom doesn't come from having all the answers—it comes from fearing the Lord enough to ask the right questions. Proverbs 1:7 reminds us that the beginning of knowledge isn't found in degrees or experiences, but in a heart that bows in reverence before God. The wise life starts when we stop pretending we're in control and start listening to the One who is. If we want to grow in wisdom, we must be willing to receive correction, seek counsel, and submit our decisions to God's direction. The question isn't just, *Do you want to be wise?*—but rather, *Are you willing to be humbled so God can make you wise?*

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
 2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*
-

Leader Resources

Small Group Curriculum: Proverbs 1:1–7

Title: *The Beginning of Wisdom*

Main Idea: True wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord—a worshipful reverence that shapes how we live, learn, and listen.

1. Session Overview

This session lays the foundation for biblical wisdom. Proverbs opens with a mission statement for godly living and a warning: wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, but fools will ignore it. In a culture that equates knowledge with credentials and wisdom with cleverness, Solomon grounds wisdom in worship. This study will help us hear God’s voice and walk in His ways.

2. Opening

Prayer & Accountability Breakouts (2–3 people):

- Where have you seen the Lord’s wisdom in your life this week?
- Are there areas where you’ve leaned on your own understanding rather than God’s?

Icebreaker:

What’s a piece of advice you wish you’d taken earlier in life?

3. Scripture Reading

Proverbs 1:1–7

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (v. 7)

4. Teaching Points with Commentary and Quotes

1. The Aim of Proverbs (vv. 1–4)

Solomon outlines the divine purpose of Proverbs:

- **To know wisdom and instruction** – “Wisdom” (Hebrew: *ḥokmâ*) is skill in godly living, not abstract theory.
- **To understand words of insight** – Proverbs isn’t just behavior modification; it’s heart transformation through discernment.
- **To receive instruction in wise dealing** – These verses speak of character formation through discipline.

Commentary:

"Proverbs is not merely a collection of ancient sayings; it is inspired by the Spirit to form the moral imagination of God's people." – Tremper Longman III

Quote:

"Wisdom is the ability to see life from God's perspective and act accordingly." – Tony Evans

Application Insight:

Ask yourself: Do I merely *know* truths, or am I being shaped by them into someone who lives wisely?

2. The Target Audience (vv. 4–5)

The Proverbs are for:

- The **simple** (Hebrew: *pethî*)—the naïve or uninformed, often the young.
- The **youth**—those still forming patterns for life.
- The **wise**—those already mature but who continue to grow in discernment.

Commentary:

"Even the wise never graduate from the school of godliness. Wisdom is not a possession, but a pursuit." – Derek Kidner

Quote:

"The path of wisdom is lifelong. It is traveled by the humble, not the proud." – Charles Bridges

Application Insight:

Do you see yourself as someone still in need of wisdom, regardless of age or experience?

3. The Foundation of Wisdom (v. 7)

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."

- "Fear" here means awe-filled reverence and joyful submission to God.
- It is not terror, but recognition of God's majesty, holiness, and authority.
- All true knowledge is founded not on facts but on a right relationship with God.

Commentary:

"To fear the Lord is to stand in awe of Him and to respond in worship, obedience, and love. It is the moral mindset that seeks to please God." – ESV Study Bible

Quotes:

"You must not start with man; you must start with God. And when you do, wisdom follows." – Adrian Rogers

“The fear of the Lord is not the end of wisdom. It is the beginning. It is the first step on the path that leads to understanding.” – Joby Martin

Contrast:

Fools—those who despise wisdom—reject correction, hate discipline, and elevate self over God. This isn’t just intellectual ignorance; it’s spiritual rebellion.

Application Insight:

What areas of your life reflect godly fear—and where might you be living foolishly?

5. Discussion Questions

1. According to verses 1–4, what specific purposes does Solomon give for writing Proverbs?
2. Why does Solomon say even the wise should continue to learn (v. 5)? What does this tell us about spiritual maturity?
3. What is “the fear of the Lord”? How is it different from fear of punishment? (v. 7)
4. How does our culture define wisdom—and how is that different from biblical wisdom?
5. What is one area of your life where you need to grow in the fear of the Lord this week?

6. Application Points

- **Reflect:** Wisdom begins with surrender, not information. Are there places in your life where pride is resisting God’s correction?
- **Practice:** Take one proverb this week and pray it into your life. Ask: *What does this say about God? What does it require of me?*
- **Pursue:** Ask a mature believer for wisdom in a current decision you’re facing.

Quote to Remember:

“Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you would have preferred to talk.” – Doug Larson

Final Reflection:

What would it look like this week to fear the Lord in how you speak, plan, or respond to correction?

7. Closing Reflection and Prayer

Lead your group in a moment of reflection:

- Where have you substituted your own voice for God’s wisdom?
- Where have you resisted instruction or dismissed correction?

Prayer:

“Lord, teach us to fear You—not with trembling dread, but with worshipful awe. Shape our hearts to love Your wisdom and despise folly. Give us humble hearts to receive correction and delight in instruction. Amen.”

8. Memory Verse

Proverbs 1:7 – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

9. Leader's Notes

- Consider opening with a story from your own life about a time you rejected wise counsel—and what you learned.
- Use humor or vulnerability to model a humble approach to wisdom.
- Help the group connect “fear of the Lord” with love and worship—not just reverence, but joyful surrender.

