

Sunday School Member Quarterly

Spring 2024

Jonah, Proverbs

Live Wisely

Sunday School Lessons for Adults and Youth
Written by John O. Yates



Morningside

B A P T I S T C H U R C H

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Sunday School – 9:00 each Sunday Morning

Sunday School Lessons

March through May 2024

Jonah, Proverbs

Live Wisely

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Sunday School Member Quarterly, Winter 2003-2004, Jonah & Proverbs,

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Revised and updated 2024 for the Spring 2024 quarter.

Daily Bible Reading Guide

Read the following scripture passages each day and complete the learning activities in this book each week. This will prepare you for Sunday School class, and God will bless you as you read, study, and memorize His Word.

Week of February 26 – March 2

Mon: Jonah 1; **Tues:** Nahum 1; **Wed:** Nahum 2;
Thurs: Nahum 3; **Fri:** Psalm 139; **Sat:** Jonah 1

Week of March 4 – 9

Mon: Jonah 2; **Tues:** Jonah 3; **Wed:** Psalm 51;
Thurs: Memorize Jonah 2:9; **Fri:** Jonah 2; **Sat:** Jonah 3

Week of March 11 – 16

Mon: Jonah 4; **Tues:** Psalm 32; **Wed:** Psalm 37;
Thurs: Psalm 136; **Fri:** Romans 9; **Sat:** Jonah 4

Week of March 18 – 23

Mon: Proverbs 1; **Tues:** Proverbs 2; **Wed:** Proverbs 9;
Thurs: Memorize Proverbs 1:7; **Fri:** James 1; **Sat:** Proverbs 1

Week of March 25 – 30

Mon: 1 Corinthians 15; **Tues:** Matthew 28; **Wed:** Mark 16;
Thurs: Psalm 22; **Fri:** Luke 24; **Sat:** 1 Corinthians 15

Week of April 1 – 6

Mon: Proverbs 2; **Tues:** Proverbs 3; **Wed:** Proverbs 9;
Thurs: Memorize Proverbs 3:5-6; **Fri:** Proverbs 2;
Sat: Proverbs 3

Week of April 8 – 13

Mon: Proverbs 4; **Tues:** Proverbs 7; **Wed:** 1 Corinthians 6;
Thurs: Memorize Proverbs 4:23; **Fri:** Proverbs 4;
Sat: Proverbs 7

Week of April 15 – 20

Mon: Proverbs 5; **Tues:** Proverbs 6; **Wed:** 1 Thessalonians 4;
Thurs: Memorize Proverbs 6:32; **Fri:** Proverbs 22;
Sat: Proverbs 23

Week of April 22 – 27

Mon: Proverbs 20; **Tues:** Proverbs 23; **Wed:** Proverbs 31;
Thurs: Memorize Proverbs 20:1; **Fri:** Proverbs 20;
Sat: Proverbs 23

Week of April 29 – May 4

Mon: Proverbs 13; **Tues:** Proverbs 22; **Wed:** Proverbs 23;
Thurs: Memorize Proverbs 22:6; **Fri:** Proverbs 24;
Sat: Proverbs 29

Week of May 6 – 11

Mon: Proverbs 31; **Tues:** 1 Timothy 2; **Wed:** 1 Peter 3;
Thurs: Memorize Proverbs 31:30; **Fri:** Ruth 2;
Sat: Proverbs 31

Week of May 13 – 18

Mon: Proverbs 11; **Tues:** 1 Peter 2; **Wed:** Proverbs 19;
Thurs: Ephesians 4:17-32; **Fri:** Romans 12; **Sat:** Proverbs 26

Week of May 20 – 25

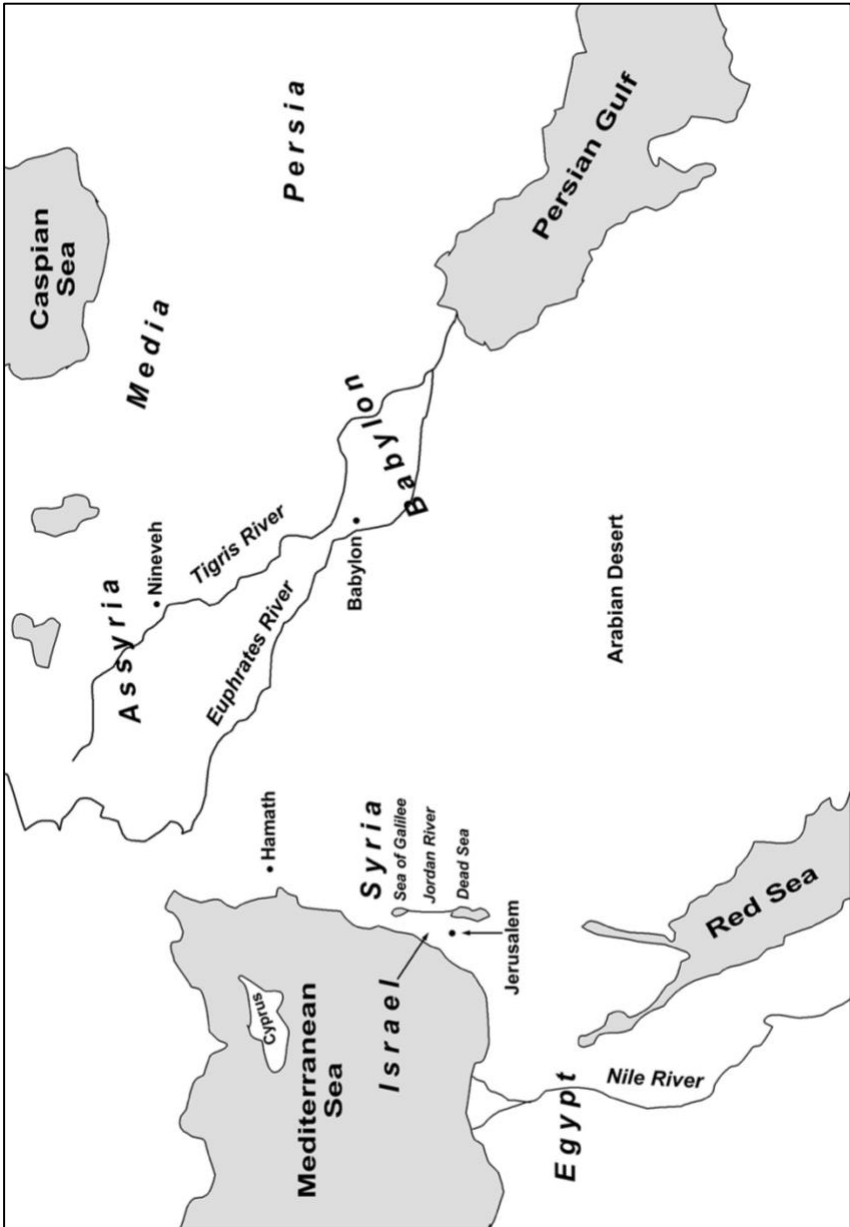
Mon: Proverbs 6; **Tues:** Proverbs 12; **Wed:** Proverbs 15;
Thurs: Proverbs 21; **Fri:** Proverbs 28; **Sat:** Revelation 21

Coming Next Quarter

(June – August 2024)

1 & 2 Thessalonians

Map



Introduction to Jonah

Author: Jonah

Date: Approx. 760 B.C.

Jonah: Jonah was a prophet who lived in the Northern Kingdom of Israel during the reign of King Jeroboam II (782-753 B.C.). The name Jonah means “*dove*” in Hebrew.

Jonah was the son of Amittai (2 Kings 14:25; Jonah 1:1). He lived in the Israelite town of **Gath-Hepher** (see the **Map** on page 5), which was located in Galilee, only 3 miles northeast of Jesus’ hometown of Nazareth (the chief priests and Pharisees were either mistaken or lied when they insisted in John 7:52 that no prophet had ever come out of Galilee).

Nineveh: Nineveh (see the **Map** on page 5) was the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. Assyria rose to prominence after conquering Syria. Assyria was the constant enemy of the Northern Kingdom of Israel during the 8th and 9th centuries B.C. It was located on the east shore of the Tigris River, very near the modern city of Mosul in northern Iraq (about 230 miles north of Baghdad¹). Nineveh was very large and had a huge population. It was utterly destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 612 B.C., about 150 years after the time of Jonah.

This Quarter’s Study: The title of this quarter’s study is *Live Wisely*. Jonah’s experiences teach us that if we want to live wisely, we must **always** obey God in everything He commands us to do.

¹ *World Book Millennium 2000 (Deluxe)*, Copyright © 1999 by World Book, Inc.

Running from God

Have you ever seen one of those videos of people trying to run from the police? Someone commits a crime or traffic violation, and the police turn on their flashing lights and pursue the person. Rather than surrendering, the person takes off at a high speed, trying to outrun the police.

The criminal leads the police on a dangerous high-speed chase down the expressway or through busy city streets. More police cars (and even helicopters) join in. There is no chance for escape, yet the criminal continues **running**, until the police catch him.

What is the cost of this person running from the police? Several cars are probably wrecked or damaged. Often, the criminal is injured (or even killed) in a wreck. Law enforcement personnel and innocent bystanders are sometimes hurt. There is usually significant property damage. **When the criminal runs, many people get hurt.** These are some of the **costs** of running from the police.

Similarly, there are costs for running from God. Jonah found this out the hard way, so let's see if we can learn from his mistakes.

Jonah 1:1-2 Where did God tell Jonah to go?

Why did God want Jonah to “*cry against*” Nineveh?

Jonah 1:3 Where did Jonah go?

Why did he want to go there?

What did this cost him?

Nineveh was 500 miles to the northeast, while Tarshish was 2,400 miles to the west! Jonah wanted to go in the **exact opposite direction** from what God told him.

- Jonah 1:4** What did God do?
- How severe was the storm?
- Jonah 1:5** The mariners threw all the valuable cargo overboard to try to save the ship. Where was Jonah?
- Jonah 1:6** The shipmaster rebuked Jonah for sleeping. What did he tell Jonah to do?
- Jonah 1:7** Casting lots was a common method of decision-making in ancient times. On whom did the lot fall?
- Jonah 1:8** What did they ask Jonah?
- Jonah 1:9** “And he said unto them, I am an _____; and I _____ the _____, the _____ of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.”
- Jonah 1:10** There is rebuke in the sailors’ question: “Why did **you** run from God and put **all of us** in danger?”
- Jonah 1:11-12** They asked Jonah what they could do to save their lives. What did Jonah tell them?
- Jonah 1:13** The men tried to row to shore, but couldn’t.
- Jonah 1:14** The lost sailors prayed to God. What two things did they ask the LORD?
1. _____
2. _____
- Jonah 1:15** What happened when they threw Jonah overboard?
- Jonah 1:16** What did the sailors do?

Jonah 1:17 A great fish swallowed Jonah. Where had the fish come from?

How long was he in the fish's belly (Matt. 12:40)?

Concluding Thoughts: Jonah ran from God. Did he get away?

The police **usually** catch fleeing criminals, but God **ALWAYS** “gets his man.” You **CANNOT** run away from God (Ps. 139:7-11), but people still try. Look at what running from God cost Jonah:

- **Spiritual decline** (Jonah went down) – v. 3 & 5
- **Money** (he paid the fare) – v. 3
- **Hurting others** (Jonah's disobedience put others in danger and cost them lots of money) – v. 4 & 5
- **Missed opportunities** for ministry (Jonah wasn't helping others, he was causing them trouble) – v. 6 & 10
- **His testimony** (Jonah was a hypocrite who claimed to fear God while actually disobeying Him) – v. 9
- **Sanity** (he was suicidal, choosing death over obedience) – v. 12
- Jonah nearly **lost his life** – v. 15 & 17
- **Confinement** (God put Jonah in a place where He could get his attention) – v. 17

Running from God is unwise and foolish. It will cost you money, time, missed opportunities, your testimony, your comfort & safety, and perhaps even your life. Disobedience will cause you to decline spiritually, and you will surely hurt others.

What has God told you to do? Obey; don't run from God!

Project: Do what God tells you (in the Bible) this week. What happened while Jonah was inside the fish? You'll learn about that in next week's lesson. Be sure to do the **Daily Bible Readings** (page 3) each day and come to Sunday School each Sunday.

Turning to God

When you were a child, did you ever get angry with your parents? Perhaps they had punished you, and your anger and hurt caused you to withdraw from them.

You may have held that grudge for some time, but eventually your conscience bothered you. You **knew** you had to apologize and get right with your parents, but you didn't **want to** at first. Your pride kept telling you that you were right, and that your parents were treating you unfairly. **Were you happy during that time?**

Did you ever get right with your parents again? Probably so, but not until you **tore down** your pride, **admitted** you were wrong, **asked** your parents' forgiveness, and **obeyed** their instructions.

The same thing happened to Jonah and to the people of Nineveh.

Jonah 2:1 What did Jonah do while in the fish's belly?

Jonah 2:2 What did Jonah's affliction cause him to do?

Did God hear Jonah's desperate prayer?

Jonah 2:3-6 What kinds of trouble had Jonah experienced?

Jonah 2:7 Who did Jonah remember and pray to when he was in serious trouble?

Previously (Jonah 1:3), Jonah foolishly tried to run from God. In the belly of the fish, however, Jonah remembered God and prayed to God. What made the difference?

Trouble and danger caused Jonah to turn back to God. This is human nature: when we are in serious trouble and danger we turn to God for help. Do you remember all the prayers and talk of God

shortly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001? Americans turned to God and talked of God in those days, but not anymore.

Jonah 2:8 Jonah believed the lies that, (a) he didn't have to obey God, and (b) he could run from God. He realized that his thinking had been wrong, and he admitted this to God.

Jonah 2:9 What two things did Jonah promise God?

1. _____
 2. _____
- “ _____ is of the LORD.”

Jonah 2:10 What did the LORD do?

Jonah lived through the storm, the sea, and the fish. He recommitted himself to God and promised to obey God. Let's see if he followed through on that commitment.

Jonah 3:1-2 God spoke to Jonah again. What did He tell Jonah to do this time?

Jonah 3:3 What did Jonah do?

Nineveh was a very large city. It was so large, in fact, that it took three days to walk around the Nineveh “metropolitan area.” Nineveh was also known for its wickedness and cruelty.

Jonah 3:4 Jonah's message was simple: “Yet _____ days, and _____ shall be _____.”

Jonah 3:5 The Ninevites did three things in response to Jonah's message: “The people of Nineveh (a) _____ God, and (b) proclaimed a _____, and (c) put on _____.” Wearing sackcloth symbolized humiliation, sorrow, and repentance.

Jonah 3:6 What did the king of Nineveh do?

The king issued a decree (verses 7-8) requiring every person and animal to fast, wear sackcloth, and cry out to God.

Jonah 3:8 The king told the people to do another very important thing: “Let them _____ every one from his _____ way, and from the _____ that is in their _____.”

Jonah 3:9 What did the king hope God would do?

Jonah 3:10 How did God respond to their repentance?

Concluding Thoughts: In chapter 2 we learned that when Jonah found himself in serious trouble (the result of his sin), he turned back to God. Jonah did four things to turn back to God:

1. He **remembered** God (verse 7)
2. He **prayed** to God (verse 7)
3. He **admitted** that he was wrong (verse 8)
4. He **recommitted** himself to God (verse 9)

In chapter 3 the people of Nineveh heard the message of impending judgment, and they turned to God by doing the following three things:

1. They **believed** God (verse 5)
2. They **humbled** themselves before God (verses 5-8)
3. They **stopped** their evil behavior (verse 8)

What about you? **Do you need to turn back to God?** If so, why don't you do the things Jonah did. It's the wise thing to do.

Do you need to turn to God for the very first time? If so, you'll need to do the things the Ninevites did. Read the scripture verses printed on the back cover of this book, turn away from your sin, and ask Jesus Christ to forgive you and save you right now.

Project: Turn to God; life will be much better if you do. Memorize **Jonah 2:9**. Obey God and keep your promises to Him.

Being Angry with God

Have you ever been angry with God?

That may sound like a strange question. How can we be angry with God, when we remember that He made us, saved us, and gives us everything? The fact remains, however, that Christians often get angry with God. Consider the following examples.

- Bill was praying for a job promotion, which would give him a big pay increase. He believed it was God's will for him to get the promotion, and planned to increase his giving when his pay went up. But surprisingly, Bill's lost coworker got the promotion. Bill became depressed, discouraged, and resentful. He was angry with God because He didn't answer his prayer.
- Crystal hated looking in the mirror. She had curly hair, while all her friends and the people she wanted to look like had straight hair. No matter how much she tried to straighten and style it, she was never happy with it. She was angry with God for making her with curly hair.

Jonah was angry with God. In this week's lesson, we will learn how Jonah's anger affected him, and how God dealt with Jonah.

Jonah 4:1 The word, "*it*" refers to the way God treated Nineveh (read Jonah 3:10). How did Jonah feel about God's mercy toward the Ninevites?

Back in chapter 1, Jonah disobeyed God and tried to run away from Him. In the next verse, he finally tells **why** he ran from God.

Jonah 4:2 Why didn't Jonah go to Nineveh the first time God told him to?

What did Jonah know about God? "Thou art a _____ God, and _____, slow

to _____, and of great _____, and
_____ thee of the _____.”

Jonah 4:3 What did Jonah ask God to do?

There are two important lessons we can learn from Jonah:

1. It is not unusual for **depression** to follow spiritual **victory** (see 1 Kings 19:4).
2. If **we** experience revival and renewal (like the Ninevites did), **other believers** may get mad (like Jonah did)!

Jonah 4:4 What did God ask Jonah?

Jonah 4:5 What did Jonah do next?

God wasn't finished with Jonah, yet. Read on to see what He did.

Jonah 4:6 What did the LORD do?

How did Jonah feel about the gourd?

Jonah 4:7 What did God do the next day?

What happened to the gourd?

Jonah 4:8 What did God do next?

What did Jonah wish for?

Jonah said, “It is _____ for me to
_____ than to _____.”

Jonah was having a “pity party.” The problem with pity parties is that no one comes to them but “me, myself, and I.”

Jonah 4:9 What did God ask Jonah?

How did Jonah answer?

Jonah 4:10 Jonah had pity on the gourd. What did God say about Jonah's relationship to the gourd?

Jonah 4:11 “And should not I _____ Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand _____ that cannot discern between their _____ hand and their _____ hand; and also much _____?”

God lovingly taught Jonah a lesson: **people are more important than things**. Jonah also learned that **God is merciful**. We, too, should be merciful when people sincerely repent of their sins and turn from their wicked ways.

Concluding Thoughts: Jonah was unhappy with the way God was running things. The people of Nineveh were evil and wicked, and Jonah thought they should all die. They repented of their wickedness, however, and God was merciful to them. Jonah didn't like that one bit. If he were God, he would have wiped Nineveh off the map. Jonah's anger made him **despondent, self-centered, and suicidal**.

What about you?

Are you angry with God? Are you unhappy with the way God made you (your looks or abilities)? Are you unhappy with your circumstances? Has someone treated you unfairly, and you're angry with God for not fixing it? Are you mad because God has been merciful or given a blessing to someone else?

If you answered, “Yes” to any of those questions, then **you are not right with God**. Like Jonah, you're probably depressed, self-centered, and you may even be suicidal. There's only one way out: **confess your sin**. Do it **NOW**.

Project: Thank God for making you the way you are. Thank Him for His mercy and blessings on others.

Introduction to Proverbs

Authors: Solomon and others

Date: 950 – 700 B.C.

Proverb: A proverb is a short saying that gives practical advice for living. Some familiar modern proverbs include, “The early bird catches the worm;” and “Two wrongs don’t make a right.” Most cultures have such short, wise sayings.

The proverbs contained in the Bible are different from other proverbs in that they were inspired by Almighty God and placed in His perfect Word. The book of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings to teach a person how to be wise and to warn against the dangers of foolish behavior.

Author & Date: King Solomon (who reigned from 970-931 B.C.) wrote most of the proverbs. The Bible tells us that Solomon wrote a total of 3,000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:32), several hundred of which are contained in the book of Proverbs. Chapters 30 and 31 are identified as being the words of Agur and King Lemuel. Agur’s identity is uncertain, but some scholars believe “King Lemuel” was another name for Solomon. Chapters 25 – 29 are proverbs of Solomon that were copied by the men of Hezekiah. King Hezekiah reigned from 716-687 B.C. (more than 200 years after the death of Solomon).

Basic Theme: The title of this quarter’s study is *Live Wisely*. Since the fear of the Lord is the beginning point of true wisdom, the wise person will honor and revere God, always seeking to obey His commands and heed His warnings. Much of the book of Proverbs is devoted to contrasts between the wise man and the fool, and between righteous and wicked persons.

The Beginning of Wisdom

The batter hit a long line drive into left field. Hoping to make a double, he ran as hard as he could toward second base. As he neared second, he looked into the outfield and saw that the two players who were trying to field the ball had collided. The baseball lay unattended on the ground, and the third base coach signaled him to try for home. He ran with all his might, and made it to home plate just before the throw from the outfield arrived. He had stretched a long liner into a homerun!

To his complete surprise, the umpire called him out. It seems that in his rush to get to second base, he somehow failed to step on first base. His great hit and his extra effort to reach home plate didn't matter at all because he failed to touch first base.

A lot of people are like that baseball player. They work hard, they want to make wise decisions, and they try to succeed in life, but their efforts are useless because they overlook the **first and most important issue in life**.

This first lesson in Proverbs will give us an introduction to the entire book, and teach us the **beginning point of all true wisdom**.

Prov. 1:1 These Proverbs were written by _____,
the son of King _____.

Prov. 1:2 The Proverbs will enable us “to know _____
and _____; to perceive the words of
_____.” Wisdom may be defined
as the skillful use of knowledge.

Prov. 1:3 What else will the Proverbs enable us to do?

Prov. 1:4 The word **subtlety** refers to prudence and discretion.
Who do you think “*the simple*” refers to?

Why do you think these Proverbs are directed toward “*the young man* (person)?”

Prov. 1:5 What will a wise man do?

Who will seek wise counsel?

Prov. 1:6 A wise person will continue learning, and seek wise counsel, so he can “understand a _____, and the _____; the words of the _____, and their dark sayings” (riddles, mysteries).

Verses 2-6 state the purpose of the book of Proverbs. How would you describe this purpose? _____

Prov. 1:7 What is the **beginning point** of knowledge?

“Fearing God” in the Old Testament is much like salvation in the New Testament, because it involves recognizing **WHO** God is, and admitting our utter **HELPLESSNESS** apart from His grace.

Prov. 1:7 What do foolish people despise?

Prov. 1:8-9 What are the benefits of hearing and obeying one’s parents?

Proverbs 2:1-4 present a **condition**: **IF** we will receive godly instruction and diligently seek wisdom, **THEN** we will receive the benefits described in verses 5-9.

Prov. 2:5 What will we understand?

What will we find?

Prov. 2:6 Where does real wisdom come from?

Prov. 2:7-8 What does God do for us? “He _____ up sound _____ for the righteous: He is a buckler (shield) to them that walk _____. He _____ the paths of judgment, and _____ the way of His saints.”

Prov. 2:9 What can we then understand?

Turn now to chapter 9.

Prov. 9:10 What is the **beginning point** of wisdom?

How do we get understanding?

Prov. 9:11 What blessings come to those who are wise?

Prov. 9:12 Our decisions and actions have consequences: wisdom brings blessings, but foolishness brings problems.

Concluding Thoughts: Do you remember the baseball player who failed to step on first base? He lost everything because he didn’t make the right **first** step. The first step (**beginning point**) of true wisdom is respecting, fearing, and knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. You may have four earned doctorates, but if you don’t know the Lord you are **NOT** wise; your thinking and intellect are flawed.

The good news is that you don’t have to be a “rocket scientist” to know the Lord. If you honestly admit that God is holy and righteous, but you are a sinner without any way to save yourself, then you can trust Jesus to save you. When you do, you will have reached the **beginning of true wisdom**. Read the verses printed on the back of this book and ask Christ to save you now.

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 1:7**. When you need wisdom, ask God (James 1:5) and seek counsel from godly people. Make your decisions based on the instructions and warnings in the Bible.

Why Does the Resurrection Matter?

Dylan was unusually upbeat when he arrived for work. “What are you so happy about?” asked his co-worker, Robbie. Dylan replied, “I had a great time last night. I hopped on my bicycle and rode up to the moon. When I got there, I sat in a lawn chair and just watched the stars and planets go by. It was great!”

Robbie thought Dylan was just kidding around, but he stuck by his story. Disgusted, Robbie demanded, “Show me some proof that you went to the moon. Did anyone see you go or come back? Do you have any witnesses?” “Oh, no,” replied Dylan, “It was a secret trip – no one saw me.”

Dylan’s story was far-fetched and he had absolutely no proof, so Robbie had no reason to believe him.

Today’s lesson is about another far-fetched story: the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus was arrested, beaten almost to death, nails were driven through His feet and hands, He was hung on a cross, and then a spear was thrust into His heart. His dead body was placed in a tomb, but three days later He came back to life. Unlike Dylan’s story, however, we have lots of **proof** that Jesus arose from the dead. You’ll learn about some of it in this lesson.

1 Cor. 15:1 What did the Apostle Paul declare and preach?

The **Gospel** is the story of the death, burial, resurrection, and saving power of Jesus Christ.

1 Cor. 15:2 What can the Gospel do for us?

1 Cor. 15:3 What’s the first thing Paul delivered (told) to them?

The phrase, “*according to the scriptures*” means these things were prophesied in the Old Testament (see Ps. 18:10; Ps. 22; Isa. 53).

1 Cor. 15:4 “And that He was _____, and that He _____ again the third day according to the _____.”

Those verses describe the **fact of the resurrection**: Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. But is there any **proof** for this incredible story? Were there any witnesses?

1 Cor. 15:5 Who saw Jesus after He arose from the dead?

(**Cephas** was another name for the Apostle Peter.)

1 Cor. 15:6 Who else saw Jesus alive?

Peter and the twelve might have been mistaken or hallucinating, but how can we explain away **more than 500 eyewitnesses**? At the time Paul wrote this letter, most of those people were still alive.

1 Cor. 15:7 Who else saw Jesus after His resurrection?

1 Cor. 15:8 Who was the last to see Him?

Those verses describe the **witnesses of the resurrection**. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was one of the best-documented events in ancient history. Secular historians affirmed that Jesus arose from the dead. Next let's see the **importance of the resurrection**.

1 Cor. 15:9 Why did Paul feel unworthy to be called an apostle?

1 Cor. 15:10 “But by the _____ of God I am what I am.”
Paul worked hard to serve the risen Lord Jesus.

1 Cor. 15:11 What did Paul and others do?

The witnesses of the resurrection told others. The truth of the resurrection caused them to preach about Jesus, and many believed. Some people, however, denied the resurrection (verse 12).

1 Cor. 15:13 If there is no resurrection, then _____.

1 Cor. 15:14 If Christ did not arise, what does that say about our preaching and our faith?

1 Cor. 15:15 What does that make those who preach about Him?

1 Cor. 15:17 “If Christ be not raised, your faith is _____; ye are yet in your _____.” That means we are lost!

1 Cor. 15:18 What about those who have already died (“*fallen asleep*”)?

1 Cor. 15:19 “If in this life _____ we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most _____.”

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then we are utterly **hopeless**!

1 Cor. 15:20 “But now is Christ _____ from the dead.”

1 Cor. 15:21-22 What did Adam bring upon the human race?

What does Christ bring?

Concluding Thoughts: The resurrection of Christ is a proven **fact**: literally hundreds of people saw Jesus alive after He arose from the dead. The truth of Jesus’ resurrection propelled those **witnesses** throughout the world, preaching the Good News of salvation. Millions of people have been touched and **changed** by the Gospel message over the last 2,000 years. Without the resurrection, the Gospel would be a lie, and we would all be hopelessly lost.

Has your life been touched by the truth of the resurrection? If so, thank the Lord for sending His Son to die for your sins and arise from the dead. If not, read the verses printed on the back of this book, turn from your sins, and place your faith in Jesus today.

Project: Tell someone about Christ’s resurrection this week.

Blessings of Wisdom

Most full-time jobs provide some benefits in addition to your pay. Your employer may provide paid holidays, paid vacation days, health and life insurance, a retirement plan, or even profit sharing. These are benefits that you receive as a result of being an employee.

Try an experiment. Go to your boss, and tell him or her you'd like to continue receiving your benefits, but you don't want to work anymore. Tell your boss that you'll stay home every day, but you want to be paid for holidays or if you get sick. You also want the company to continue to pay for your insurance and retirement.

What do you think will happen? Will you receive the benefits of your job without working? **Of course not!** The benefits **only** come when you **work**. In the same way, the Bible tells us there are benefits (blessings) that will come our way **IF** we live according to godly wisdom. This lesson presents nine of those blessings.

1. DISCRETION

Prov. 2:10 "When _____ entereth into thine _____,
and _____ is pleasant unto thy _____."

Prov. 2:11 What will preserve (protect) us?

What will keep (guard) us?

2. DELIVERANCE

Prov. 2:12 Who does wisdom deliver us from?

The word **froward** means perverse, wicked, stubbornly disobedient, and determined to do wrong.

Prov. 2:13 What do these evil, froward people do?

Prov. 2:14 What makes them rejoice?

What do they delight in?

WARNING! If we delight in the sinful behavior of others (either in real life or in media), then we are just like these wicked people.

Prov. 2:15 Describe the **ways** and **paths** of evil people.

Godly wisdom produces **discretion**, and discretion **delivers** us from evil people who would influence us to make unwise decisions. God's kind of wisdom will save us a lot of trouble and heartache.

3. LONG LIFE AND PEACE

Prov. 3:1 What did Solomon tell his son?

Prov. 3:2 What does obeying godly commandments give us?

4. FAVOR WITH GOD AND MAN

Prov. 3:3 Where should we write God's words?

Prov. 3:4 What will we receive when we do this?

5. DIRECTION

Prov. 3:5 “_____ in the _____ with all thine heart; and lean _____ unto thine own _____.”

Prov. 3:6 What will God do if we acknowledge Him?

6. HEALTH

Prov. 3:7 “Be not _____ in thine own _____: _____ the LORD, and _____ from _____.”

Prov. 3:8 Ancient people viewed the naval as the center of one's strength. We cannot live without healthy bone marrow. Fearing God and staying away from evil are very beneficial to our health!

7. MATERIAL BLESSINGS

Prov. 3:9 With what should we honor God?

If you are a Christian, the first fruits of your income belong to God (Ex. 23:19; Mal. 3:8-10; Matt. 23:23). You ought to give your tithe and offering **before** you do anything else with your paycheck.

Prov. 3:10 What happens when we honor God with our money?

8. GOD'S LOVING CHASTISEMENT

Prov. 3:11-12 Why shouldn't we despise the Lord's chastening?

9. HAPPINESS

Prov. 3:13 How is the man who finds wisdom described?

Concluding Thoughts: Review the nine blessings of godly wisdom found in this lesson. **Do you want those things?** Just as you can't enjoy the benefits of your job without working, you can't enjoy these benefits without having and living by godly wisdom. What is the beginning of true wisdom (Prov. 1:7; 9:10)?

If you want the blessings of godly wisdom, trust Jesus for salvation, read and study the Bible, and obey the things God tells you.

Don't seek or listen to worldly wisdom. Most talk shows and podcasts **do not** offer godly wisdom; they offer human wisdom. Their advice may make sense or appear sound, but remember that the Bible says, "*There is a way that seemeth **right** unto a man, but the **end** thereof are the ways of **death***" (Prov. 16:25).

Live according to God's wisdom. Seek wisdom from God's Word. Ask God to give you discretion. Stay away from evil people.

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 3:5-6**. Acknowledge God in all of your decisions this week, asking Him to direct your steps.

Guard Your Heart

Where do you keep your most valuable possessions? You probably keep your valuables under lock and key. They might be locked up in your house, in a safe, or in a safety deposit box at the bank. You want them guarded and protected so no one can steal them from you.

Where does the government keep its most dangerous prisoners? In maximum security prisons under the watchful eyes of many guards. Why are they locked up and guarded? So they won't get away.

This is a very important lesson, which is foundational to the rest of the lessons in the book of Proverbs. In this lesson we will learn the **seriousness** of guarding our heart, the **benefits** of guarding our heart, and the **dangers** of not guarding our heart.

Prov. 4:23 “_____ thy heart with all _____.”

The word **keep** means to guard or watch over something. In modern usage, the word **diligence** means to work hard or persistently at something, but the Hebrew word translated diligence in this verse literally refers to a prison or place of confinement. The idea in this verse, then, is that we guard our heart by keeping it in the most secure place possible.

Prov. 4:23 What comes out of our heart?

Read Matt. 12:34-35 and 15:18-19 to see what Jesus said about our heart.

To keep our heart with all diligence, we must live by godly wisdom, as described in the last two lessons.

Prov. 2:16 Who will godly wisdom deliver you from?

The **strange** woman is an immoral, adulterous woman who uses flattering words (Prov. 6:24) to entice men to sin.

Prov. 2:17 What does the immoral woman forsake and forget?

Prov. 2:18 Where does her way of life lead (Prov. 5:5; 9:18)?

Prov. 2:19 How many who go to her return again?

If we are not careful to guard our heart, then our life will be ruined. We might end up in immorality, which is strictly **forbidden** (1 Thess. 4:3), and will **hurt** us (1 Cor. 6:18).

Prov. 7:5 Solomon told his son (Prov. 7:1) that if he would obey Solomon's commands, they would "keep thee from the _____ woman, from the stranger which _____ with her _____."

In verses 7-23, Solomon described to his son how easily an immoral woman can seduce a man.

Prov. 7:6-7 How did he describe the young man?

Prov. 7:8-9 **Where** did the young man go, and **when** did he go?

Prov. 7:10 Who did he meet there?

How was she dressed?

Prov. 7:11-12 What was she doing?

Prov. 7:13 What did the woman do?

Prov. 7:14-17 What did she say to make the sin more appealing?

Prov. 7:18 What did she invite him to do?

Prov. 7:19-20 She promised that they would not get caught. **The devil always tells that same lie!**

Prov. 7:21 How did the immoral woman trap the foolish man?

Prov. 7:22 Describe how he followed her:

Prov. 7:23 In what way was the man like a bird?

Prov. 7:24 Why do you think Solomon wanted his son to **hearken** and **attend** to his words?

Prov. 7:25 “Let not thine _____ decline to her ways, go not _____ in her _____.”

Prov. 7:26 What has the immoral woman done?

Prov. 7:27 Where does immorality lead? “Her house is the way to _____, going _____ to the chambers of _____.”

Concluding Thoughts: The foolish young man described in chapter 7 did **not** guard his heart. He went right where sin was taking place and associated with sinful people; the result was that he joined in their sin. **You’re NOT guarding your heart if you go where sin is and hang around sinful people!** You **WILL** end up in sin.

Guarding your heart will:

1. Guide your steps and protect you (Prov. 4:23),
2. Deliver you from immoral people and the harm that comes from following their lifestyle (Prov. 2:16-19; 7:5-21), and
3. Keep you from making stupid and deadly decisions (Prov. 7:22-27).

Your heart is your most valuable possession. It determines what kind of life you live. **How will you guard your heart?**

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 4:23**. Protect your heart more than your most treasured possession.

Dangers of Immorality

Imagine you were driving along a country road and came to a roadblock with a bright orange sign that read “**DANGER! ROAD CLOSED!**” What would you do? Would you ignore the sign and go on, or would you turn around and go another way?

Imagine you picked up a bottle of a delicious soft drink, but found a warning label that read “**DANGER! POISON!**” What would you do? Would you ignore the warning label and drink the soft drink, or would you throw it away and get a different bottle?

We live in a very immoral world. Immorality is accepted and promoted as a normal way of life. Forty percent of the babies born in America are born to unmarried mothers. God (through Solomon) has given us some very clear warning signs concerning the dangers of immorality. Let’s learn about these dangers.

Immorality May be Alluring, But it is Deceptive and Deadly

- Prov. 5:1-2** Why did Solomon want his son to listen to him?
- Prov. 5:3** How did he describe the lips of a strange (immoral) woman?
- Prov. 5:4** She may appear and talk as sweet as honey, but what is her **end** (future)?
- Prov. 5:5** Where do her feet lead?
- Prov. 5:6** Why shouldn’t we think about her way of life?
- Prov. 5:7** What did Solomon tell his son?

- Prov. 5:8-9** Why should we stay away from immoral people?
- Prov. 5:10** What will happen to our wealth if we're immoral?
- Prov. 5:11** What else will happen if we are immoral?
- Prov. 5:12-14** How will we one day feel about our immorality?

The devil wraps up his most dangerous weapons in pretty packages (Prov. 11:22; 2 Cor. 11:14-15), just as a fisherman disguises the hook with an attractive and desirable worm. If we're foolish enough to fall for the bait, we **will** get hooked, and we **will** die!

Immorality Carries A High Price

- Prov. 6:23-24** What's the value of God's commandments?
- Prov. 6:25** “_____ not after her _____ in thine _____; neither let her _____ thee with her _____.”
- Prov. 6:26** What happens to the man who foolishly gets involved with an immoral woman?
- Prov. 6:27** What happens if you put fire in your chest?
- Prov. 6:28** What happens if you walk on hot coals?
- Prov. 6:29** Just as you will get burned by doing either of those stupid things, adultery will **hurt** you!
- Prov. 6:30** Why don't men despise the thief who steals bread?
- Prov. 6:31** What must that thief do if he is caught?
- Prov. 6:32** “But whoso committeth _____ with a woman lacketh _____: he that doeth it _____ his own _____.”

Prov. 6:33 What will **never** be wiped away?

Prov. 6:34-35 How will the spouse of the person with whom someone commits adultery respond?

Immorality is a Sign of God's Judgment

Prov. 22:14 “The mouth of strange women is a _____
_____.” If you **stay far away**, you can’t fall in.
Who **will** fall into immorality?

Immorality is Easy to Fall Into, But Hard to Escape

Prov. 23:27 “For a _____ is a deep _____; and a
_____ woman is a narrow _____.”
A deep ditch or narrow pit is almost impossible to
escape, so you’d better **stay far from it**.

Concluding Thoughts: God gives us warnings about immorality:

- Immorality may be alluring, but it is deceptive and deadly.
- Immorality carries a high price.
- Immorality is a sign of God’s judgment.
- Immorality is easy to fall into, but hard to escape.

These are just some of the dangers of immorality. The important question is this: **What will YOU do about these warnings?** Will you ignore these warnings and play around with immorality? If you do, you’re more certain to get hurt than if you ignored the warning label and drank a bottle of poison.

Live wisely. **Run** from immorality. **Stop** looking at suggestive material. **Stay away** from immoral people. If you don’t, you’ll fall into a deep pit, and you may **never** get out!

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 6:32**. Tell someone this week about the dangers of immorality.

Dangers of Drinking

Have you noticed that advertising for alcoholic beverages seems to be everywhere? You can't watch a sporting event on TV or online without being bombarded by beer commercials. Alcoholic beverage manufacturers spend billions of dollars annually on advertising. American young people and adults see thousands of beer and wine commercials each year.

Those ads always show happy people having lots of fun. Many beer commercials feature scantily-clad women in suggestive situations. The alcohol industry does everything it can to make drinking attractive to entice people to drink.

Have you ever heard a church member defend so-called "social drinking?" They remind you that Jesus drank wine, and insist that the Bible doesn't forbid drinking, only drunkenness. Is that true? What does the Bible actually say? The verses you will study today from Proverbs answer that question.

Prov. 20:1 "Wine is a _____, strong drink is _____: and whosoever is _____ thereby is not _____."

First, we need to define some terms. What are **wine** and **strong drink**? Water purification is a relatively modern luxury. We think nothing of drinking water from our faucet or of ordering iced tea made with tap water in a restaurant, but in ancient times, clean water was not available. This is still true in many foreign countries; American travelers are often warned, "Don't drink the water!"

People in Bible times mixed a very small amount of fermented wine with their water to purify it. The alcohol in the wine killed the germs in the water, but the alcohol content was so small that you'd have to drink large amounts of wine to become drunk. Strong drink, on the other hand, had much more alcohol and would quickly make someone drunk.

Now, read Proverbs 20:1 again. The Bible clearly says that wine is a **mock**er (something that makes a fool of you), and strong drink is **rag**ing (tumultuous, causing an uproar). What does the verse say about the person who is deceived by wine or strong drink?

You can drink alcoholic beverages if you want, but the Bible says you are a **fool** if you do.

Prov. 23:20 Who should we **NOT** hang around with?

The Hebrew words that are translated **winebibbers** literally mean heavy drinkers or drunkards: those who drink to excess.

Prov. 23:21 What will happen to drunkards and gluttons?

Drinking wastes your money and will ruin your life.

Prov. 23:29 “Who hath _____? Who hath _____?
Who hath _____? Who hath _____
_____ without
cause? Who hath _____ of _____?”

Prov. 23:30 What’s the answer to **all** those questions?

Prov. 23:31 What does this verse tell you **NOT** to do?

It is foolish to justify social drinking when the Bible says not to even **LOOK** at wine!

Prov. 23:32 What is the end result of drinking?

Prov. 23:33 If we drink alcohol, what will we **see** and what will we **say**?

Prov. 23:34 What will happen to we if you lie down in the middle of the sea?

What will happen if we lie down on top of a tall flagpole?

The person who drinks alcohol is **FOOLISH!**

Prov. 23:35 This is the foolish babbling of a drunk. What does he want to do when he wakes up?

You're probably aware that Proverbs 31 tells about the virtuous woman, but did you know it also contains warnings King Lemuel's mother taught him about the dangers of drinking?

Prov. 31:4 What should kings and princes stay away from?

Prov. 31:5 What will happen if they drink alcoholic drinks?

A king needs a sound mind to make wise judgments and decisions. This is true for anyone who has authority or influence over someone else. If we drink, however, our reasoning and judgment will suffer.

Prov. 31:6 Who can we give alcohol to?

Prov. 31:7 What will alcohol do for them?

Alcohol doesn't make problems go away, but those facing execution or imminent death from a terminal illness can gain some anesthetic benefit from it. The only other time wine is commended in the Bible is as a treatment for stomach problems (1 Tim. 5:23).

Prov. 31:8-9 Who should those in authority speak up for?

Concluding Thoughts: Let's review some of the things the Bible says about drinking, and compare those things to the advertising you see for alcoholic beverages.

- Alcohol will make a fool of you and lead you into tumultuous behavior (Prov. 20:1). Do the beer ads tell you this?
- Drunkards and gluttons waste their money and ruin their lives (Prov. 23:21). How many beer and wine ads tell you of this danger?

- Do the alcohol ads tell you that drinking will bring you woe, sorrow, contention, babbling, wounds, and red eyes (Prov. 23:29)?
- Do the people in those beer ads turn to the camera and tell you that in the end alcohol is as bad as being bitten by a poisonous snake (Prov. 23:32)?
- If you drink, you'll see strange, wicked things, say bad things, and act like a complete fool (Prov. 23:33-35). Do the ads tell you this?
- Do the beer and wine ads tell you that drinking will cloud your judgment so you forget right and wrong (Prov. 31:5)?

The alcohol industry wants to deceive you into thinking you'll have fun and be accepted if you drink. **This is a lie! Don't be deceived!** Some church people even may foolishly try to convince you that "social drinking" is okay, but the Bible warns us to stay away from alcohol and those who drink it.

Drinking is **FOOLISH**, and it will **HURT** you.

Do you want to be a fool, or would you like to live wisely?

If you're involved in drinking, stop it right now. Confess your sin, pour out your beer, wine, or liquor, and ask God to enable you to resist alcohol's temptations. Don't go to bars or befriend drinkers.

If you're sympathetic to alcohol, confess that as sin.

Confess your sin and change your behavior. Your future will be better if you do.

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 20:1**. If you hear someone speak favorably about alcohol this week, ask them if they would like to hear what the Bible has to say. Show them some of the verses you have studied in this lesson.

Wise Parenting

The scene is all too familiar. You are at the store picking up the things on your shopping list when you hear crying and screaming a short way down the aisle. You turn to see an exasperated parent trying to deal with a young child.

“I want a toy, I want a toy,” the child screams. The parent tells the child he or she cannot have the toy, but the child’s crying and begging only get louder. The parent tries to be firm, but the child hits the parent and screams again, “I WANT A TOY!” Finally, the embarrassed parent hands the child the toy he or she wants, and the screaming and “crying” immediately stop.

What happened? The child has learned that Mom or Dad has a breaking point, and if he can push them to that point, he can get whatever he wants.

Child discipline is a serious problem in America today. Parents don’t know how to discipline, so teachers are struggling with uncontrollable children. What does the Bible say about parenting?

Children Need Discipline

Prov. 22:15 What is “*bound up in the heart of a child?*”

Children are foolish, and don’t know what is best for them. What will drive foolishness from them?

The word **rod** means a branch or switch, not an axe handle.

Prov. 29:15 What gives wisdom?

If a child is “*left to himself,*” what will happen?

Discipline is a Mark of Love

Prov. 13:24 “He that _____ his rod _____ his son.” What does a parent who loves his child do?

Let’s review: Children are foolish and need proper discipline. A child that is **NOT** disciplined will bring shame to his mother. The parent who truly loves his or her child will chasten him at times (just as God does with His children: Prov. 3:12; Heb. 12:6; Rev. 3:19).

Correct and Teach Your Children

Prov. 23:13 “Withhold not _____ from the child.” Properly administered punishment won’t kill the child, and may keep him from an early death caused by unrestrained sinful behavior.

Prov. 23:14 What does proper discipline deliver a child from?

Prov. 23:15-16 What causes parents to rejoice?

Prov. 23:17 “Let not thine heart envy _____; but be thou in the _____ of the LORD all the day long.”

Prov. 23:18-19 There **are** future consequences to our present behavior. Parents must teach their children to make wise decisions now so they can enjoy a good future.

Benefits of Proper Discipline

Prov. 22:6 How should parents train their children?

What is the benefit of such training?

Prov. 29:17 What are the benefits of correcting your son?

Parental Teaching is a Blessing to Children

Prov. 24:13 Honey in this verse represents wisdom. Honey was the sweetest substance available to ancient people.

Prov. 24:14 God says wisdom is as sweet to your soul as honey is to your mouth (if you don't like honey, substitute chocolate). What are the blessings of wisdom?

Prov. 24:16 "For a _____ man _____ seven times, and _____ up again: but the _____ shall fall into _____."

Prov. 24:17-18 Why shouldn't we rejoice when our enemy falls?

Prov. 24:19 "_____ not thyself because of _____ men, neither be thou _____ at the _____."

Prov. 24:20 Why shouldn't we worry about evil people?

Prov. 24:27 Ancient people had to provide for their food first, and for their housing second. Godly parents teach their children to be wise by doing first things first.

Concluding Thoughts: Children need godly discipline and training, and it is the responsibility of parents to provide both. In fact, it is a **shame** when a child doesn't get discipline and training.

Are you a parent? Your child deserves and needs loving, firm, consistent discipline. Confess your shortcomings as a parent, ask God to enable you to properly train and correct your child, and make a commitment to do better, starting today.

Are you a child still living under your parents' roof? Your parents' discipline is an evidence of their love for you. Submit to their authority, obey their rules, and try to learn all you can from their wisdom and experience. Confess any sins of rebellion and

disobedience, ask your parents' forgiveness, and ask God to enable you to submit, obey, and learn. Make a commitment to God to do those things.

Do you know someone who needs help with parenting skills? Tell them what the Bible says, offer practical advice, and pray for them.

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 22:6**. Be consistent in your discipline (if you're a parent) or your obedience (if you're a child).

The Virtuous Woman

Sunday is Mother's Day. We often read Proverbs 31 on Mother's Day because it describes the virtuous woman, and contains the familiar statement, "*Her children arise up, and call her blessed.*"

In Proverbs 31 we find valuable lessons about the behavior and character traits of a virtuous person (woman or man). If we want to live wisely, we must strive to become people of virtue.

Look up the word **virtue**. Write the definition here: _____

Read Proverbs 31:10-31 and answer the following questions to learn about the **blessings** of being married to a virtuous person, the **work** of a virtuous person, the **wisdom** of a virtuous person, and the **rewards** for being a virtuous person.

The Blessing of a Virtuous Woman

Prov. 31:10 "Who can _____ a _____ woman?"

The question indicates that it is not easy to find a virtuous woman; in other words, they are rare and valuable. The Hebrew word translated **virtuous** means valor, strength, ability, virtue, and worth; so **the virtuous woman has excellent, noble, and worthy character**. How valuable is she?

Prov. 31:11 How does her husband feel about her?

Prov. 31:12 How will she treat him?

How long will this treatment last?

The virtuous woman is very valuable and she is a blessing to her husband. Read Proverbs 12:4 and 19:14 for more on her value.

The Work of the Virtuous Woman

- Prov. 31:13** How does she work?
- Prov. 31:14** What does she bring to her family?
- Prov. 31:15** When does she start her day's work?
- Prov. 31:16** A worthy, excellent wife is good in business.
- Prov. 31:17** "She girdeth her loins with _____, and _____ her arms." She keeps herself in good shape for the work she has to do, **NOT** so she can look like a movie star or a model.
- Prov. 31:18** How long does she work?
- Prov. 31:19** The spindle and distaff were used to make clothing.
- Prov. 31:20** Who does she extend her hands to?
- Prov. 31:21** Why isn't she afraid of cold weather?
- Prov. 31:22** Describe her clothing.
- Prov. 31:23** Why do you think her husband is well known?
- Prov. 31:24** She uses her skills to add to the family income.

The Wisdom of the Virtuous Woman

- Prov. 31:25** She is clothed with _____ and _____ (see also 1 Tim. 2:9-11; 1 Pet. 3:1-5). She doesn't fear or worry about the future.
- Prov. 31:26** Describe her speech:
- Prov. 31:27** How does she care for her family?

Is she lazy or idle?

The virtuous woman is **valuable**, **hardworking**, and **wise**. What kinds of rewards will she earn?

The Reward of the Virtuous Woman

Prov. 31:28 What do her children do?

What does her husband do?

Prov. 31:29 “Many daughters have done _____,
but thou _____ them _____.”

Prov. 31:30 “Favor is _____, and beauty is
_____: but a woman that _____ the
_____, she shall be _____.”

Prov. 31:31 Her behavior speaks for itself, and she deserves the highest praise.

Concluding Thoughts: Our world glorifies physical beauty, but God values wisdom, hard work, and a virtuous lifestyle. Physical beauty will disappear over time, or it can be wiped away by a disfiguring accident, but godly character traits last forever.

What about **you**? Are you a woman (or man) of virtue, excellence, and godly character?

You may or may not be like the person described in Proverbs 31, but here is the most important question: **Do you want to be?** If so, tell God right now, study and memorize God’s Word, and seek wise counsel from a person of virtue.

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 31:30**. Seek to be a virtuous, hardworking, and wise person this week.

Dishonesty and Laziness

What do the following three stories have in common?

The manager of a local grocery store secretly adjusts all of his produce scales, so that they indicate a greater weight of produce than the customers actually selected. The difference isn't much – each scale reads two ounces more than the actual weight – but the produce profits have increased significantly.

Sam has been with his company for four years and is considered a good employee. In truth, though, Sam spends as much as two hours out of each workday surfing the Internet, checking social media, and visiting with other employees while they are trying to work.

Natasha's parents are proud of the recent improvement in her school grades. She enjoys her parents' praise and the extra privileges they give her. They have no idea that Natasha is cheating on tests and paying other students to write her term papers.

These three people are lazy, so they resort to dishonesty to get ahead. The Proverbs we will study this week teach us three important truths about honesty and laziness.

God Hates Dishonesty

Prov. 11:1 “A _____ balance is _____ to the LORD: but a just _____ is His _____.”

In ancient times, merchants weighed their products on balance scales. The scale had two pans; if you wanted to buy one pound of grain, the merchant placed a one-pound counterweight in one pan, and put grain in the other pan until the scale balanced perfectly. A dishonest merchant would use counterweights that weighed less than they were supposed to, to cheat his customers. The word **abomination** means that it is disgusting, detestable, and revolting to

God. **God hates dishonesty** (a “*false balance*”), but He delights in an honest (“*just*”) weight (see also Prov. 20:10).

Prov. 20:23 “Divers _____ are an
_____ unto the LORD; and a false
_____ is not _____.”

God hates dishonesty. Will liars get away with their deceit?

Liars Will Be Punished

Prov. 19:5 A **false witness** is a liar. What will eventually happen to liars?

Prov. 19:9 What does this verse say will happen to liars?

Prov. 20:17 **Bread of deceit** refers to that which is gained by dishonest means. How does it taste at first?

What will it be like later?

God hates dishonesty and liars will be punished. What does the Bible say about laziness?

God's People Shouldn't Be Lazy

Prov. 20:4 The **sluggard** is a lazy, slothful person who uses any available excuse to get out of working. What excuse will he use for not plowing?

What will he do when harvest time comes?

Prov. 24:30 Whose field and vineyard did Solomon describe?

Prov. 24:31 What was the condition of the lazy man's property?

Prov. 24:32 “Then I _____, and _____ it well:
I _____ upon it, and received
_____.” Solomon learned from what
he saw.

- Prov. 24:33** The lazy man would rather sleep than work.
- Prov. 24:34** What will come upon the lazy person?
- Prov. 26:13** What excuse does the lazy man use to avoid work?
- Prov. 26:14** How is a slothful person like a door?
- Prov. 26:15** What is he too lazy to do?
- Prov. 26:16** What does the sluggard think about himself?

Concluding Thoughts: God hates dishonesty, liars will certainly be punished, and God's people shouldn't be lazy.

Honesty is a quickly-disappearing character trait in our modern world. Most people think nothing of lying if it will help them. People lie to themselves, their spouses, their employers, the government, and even to God. God hates such dishonesty. Go ahead and lie if you want, but eventually you will be punished.

Laziness is common today. Most people do as little work as they can get by with. Our ancestors worked from dawn to dusk to carve a living out of the American wilderness, but modern Americans love their leisure and free time. Many workers are lazy, and they cheat their employers by not working 8 hours for 8 hours pay.

Are you dishonest? Confess your sin to God, and promise Him to be honest in what you say and what you do. Return anything you've gained through dishonesty to its rightful owner.

Are you lazy? Confess your sin to God, and make a commitment to Him to be a diligent worker. Your employer will be glad you did.

Project: Be honest in your dealings with others this week. Don't be lazy or cheat your employer. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** each day, and be sure to come to Sunday School this Sunday.

Things God Hates

“God loves everyone.”

Have you ever heard (or made) that statement? That’s a nice sentiment, but unfortunately, the Bible clearly says there are some things and some people God **hates**. Not only does He hate them, but the Bible also tells us they are revolting and sickening to Him.

Do **you** want to be revolting and disgusting to God? Certainly not! Read the following verses to learn some of the things God hates, so you can avoid them at all costs.

Prov. 6:16 Verses 17-19 list seven things that God hates.

Remember that the word **abomination** means something that is disgusting, detestable, revolting, abhorrent, loathsome, and will make you physically sick to your stomach. What does God hate?

- Prov. 6:17**
1. “A _____ look”
 2. “A _____ tongue”
 3. “Hands that _____ innocent _____”

- Prov. 6:18**
4. “An heart that deviseth _____
_____”
 5. “Feet that be swift in _____ to
_____”

- Prov. 6:19**
6. “A _____ witness that speaketh _____”
 7. “He that soweth _____ among
_____”

Verses 17 and 18 describe **behaviors** and **attitudes** (pride, lying, hurting others, wicked thoughts, and evil deeds), but verse 19 describes **people** (those who speak lies, and those who stir up discord). God is disgusted by these behaviors, attitudes, and people.

Prov. 12:22 “_____ lips are _____ to the LORD:
but they that deal _____ are His _____.”

Prov. 16:5 Who is an abomination to the Lord?

Will they escape punishment?

Proud people, **liars**, and **troublemakers** are revolting to God.

Prov. 17:15 “He that _____ the _____,
and he that _____ the _____,
even they both are abomination to the LORD.”

Those who **twist and pervert justice** are revolting to God.

Prov. 11:20 Who else are an abomination to the Lord?

Froward means twisted, perverse, and wicked.

Prov. 15:8 “The _____ of the _____ is an
abomination to the LORD.” External acts of worship
by wicked people are disgusting to God.

Prov. 21:27 What makes the sacrifice of the wicked even more
disgusting to God?

Those who have wicked hearts, and **those who are lost but make a
show of being religious** are revolting to God.

Prov. 15:9 **Way** refers to one’s course of life or habitual
behavior. What is repulsive to God?

Prov. 15:26 What else is an abomination?

Prov. 21:4 This verse lists three things that are sin:
1. “An _____ look”
2. “A _____ heart”
3. “The _____ of the _____”

Prov. 28:9 Did you know that some **prayers** disgust God?
Whose prayer is an abomination?

The **wicked** person does not know God, does not honor God with his behavior, and does not obey God. In other words, the wicked person is **unsaved**. The verses we have just studied tell us that God hates and is disgusted by the lost person's religion, lifestyle, thoughts, work, and even his prayers. In short, **there is NOTHING a lost person can do that pleases God.**

Concluding Thoughts: Did you realize that God hates so many things? The Bible tells us that the Lord hates pride, lying, hurting innocent people, wicked thoughts, evil deeds, those who speak lies, those who stir up discord, proud people, liars, troublemakers, those who twist and pervert justice, those who are lost but do religious things, and **everything** wicked people do or think. **WOW!**

Do any of these things describe you? If so, then you and your behavior are revolting and disgusting to God.

Your religion doesn't impress God. You must stop trusting in religious rituals and actions and sincerely cry out to Jesus Christ for forgiveness and salvation. Read the verses printed on the back of this book. Admit your sin to God and turn away from that sin. Ask God to forgive you. Tell Him you are helpless to save yourself, and ask Jesus to save you. Do it now. It's the wise thing to do.

If you're doing any of the things God hates, stop right now, confess your sin, and ask God's forgiveness. Avoid doing the kinds of things that make God sick.

Project: Strive to please God in all that you do. Pick up a *Sunday School Member Quarterly* for the Summer quarter and begin the **Daily Bible Reading Guide** on Monday.