

Living Wisely

Quarter 9 | Lesson 4 | Spiritual Formation

1. **Connecting:** Play a game to learn the value of seeking wisdom.
2. **Teaching:** Learn about wisdom from Proverbs and apply it to real-life situations (Proverbs 1:1–7; 3:3–4, 5–6; 4:6–7; 11:23–24; 12:22, 25; 20:3; 28:18).
3. **Responding:** Memorize a proverb to help with wise living.

SUPPLIES

- Bibles
- Large box or bag with 8 common objects in it (Items could include a spoon, a rock, a piece of clothing, or other common things. One of the items should be a Bible.)

Optional Supplies:

- Memory Verse Poster
- Paper
- Pencils
- Student Pages

Teacher Devotion

Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance.

Proverbs 1:5

True wisdom has many benefits. When we trust and obey God and follow His will for our lives, we can find joy in even difficult situations and experience peace even when the world around us is in chaos. Living wisely is not just being resourceful and intelligent; it is walking closely with God so that our lives reflect His wise ways.

We may seek to grow in wisdom, but we often do not take practical steps toward obtaining it. God's Word is filled with the wisdom we need. So seek God's wisdom! Choose to read a proverb each day and try to memorize it. Add a request for wisdom to your daily prayers. Look for opportunities throughout the day to live out godly principles. As you seek to walk closely with the Lord, wisdom will never be far away.

Lesson Time

1. **Connecting:** Play a game to learn the value of seeking wisdom.

As you greet the students, invite them to share 1 way they responded wisely during the past week. If you have time, allow 2–3 teens to share their experiences with the whole group.

We have been learning about wisdom. We have learned that wisdom is something important to seek. So let's go find some wisdom!

Divide the group into 4 teams. Clear a large area of your teaching space. Have each team go to a different side of the cleared area. In the centre of the cleared area, place the box or bag with the items inside. Have the teams turn around so their backs are facing the box. Then give the following instructions:

When the game begins, I will say a statement. If this statement is true for you, you will turn around, run to the box in the middle, and remove 1 object from it. Only the first person to reach the box can take out an item. No pushing or grabbing! After the first person has gotten an item from the box, everyone will return to where she started. The person with the item will take it back to his team. Then I will say another statement. We will repeat this until all of the items in the box have been taken.

When the teams are ready to start the game, read the first statement.

I always tell the truth.

Allow those who believe this is true about them to run to the box. The first person to reach it can take out 1 item. Then the players will return to their teams. Once the students have returned to their places, read the second statement. Repeat this process until all of the items have been removed from the box.

I am always kind to my friends.

I know how to control my anger.

I listen to the advice others give me.

I try to live wisely.

I obey my parents.

I try to be cheerful.

I am humble.

Teacher Tip: If you have time, you can repeat this game by making up your own statements. For fun, you can make up silly statements, such as “I sneezed yesterday” or “I like to stand on my head.” Or you can use statements that describe the students, such as “I am wearing a red shirt” or “I am 12 years old.”

The team that collects the most items wins the game. Congratulate the winning team. Then collect the items and have the students sit down to discuss the game.

- **What do you think this game can teach us about wisdom?**
- **What items did you take out of the box that can help you to live wisely? Why do you think this is true?**

Allow 2–3 students to share their thoughts. Allow for creative and even silly answers for some of the items. Then, if they have not mentioned it, remind them that the Bible can help them to learn to live wisely.

The book of Proverbs in the Bible teaches us that wisdom is worth seeking. In fact, it tells us that those who find wisdom will discover that it has lifelong benefits. Listen to what the Bible tells us about the benefits of wisdom.

Teacher Tip: Comparing God’s wisdom to a person helps us to better understand and relate to the idea of wisdom, as we can imagine wisdom having human characteristics. Though wisdom is referred to as a female (she, her) in these verses, God’s wisdom is for both males and females.

Have a student read Proverbs 3:13–14 aloud from the Bible. If that is not possible, the passage is printed here for you.

*Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding,
for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.*
Proverbs 3:13–14

- **In what ways do you think wisdom is better than silver or gold?**
- **What benefits do you think wisdom has? You can share your own thoughts or something we have learned in previous lessons.**

Allow 4–5 students to share their thoughts. Some ideas from Proverbs: Wisdom protects us, gives us influence with others, helps us to have good relationships, and helps us to know how to respond wisely. If the students do not mention it, remind them that wisdom teaches us to live in ways that make our lives better. It can also help us to live in ways that honour God.

Living wisely helps us to be healthy and work toward our goals. It also allows us to avoid the difficulties and challenges in life that come from foolish living. Most importantly, when we obey God and live wisely as He intended, we bring glory to Him. Let's find out more about how wisdom can help us every day.

2. Teaching: Learn about wisdom from Proverbs and apply it to real-life situations (Proverbs 1:1–7; 3:3–4, 5–6; 4:6–7; 11:23–24; 12:22, 25; 20:3; 28:18).

All of the books of the Bible have purpose and can help us to learn wisdom. As we read these verses from the first chapter of Proverbs, listen for the reasons this book of the Bible is useful to us.

Have a student read Proverbs 1:1–7 aloud from the Bible. The verses are also printed here for you.

The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.
Proverbs 1:1–7

- **According to these verses, what are the purposes for the book of Proverbs?**

The proverbs are intended to give us wisdom and instruction, to help us understand words of insight, to instruct us in prudent behaviour, to help us to understand righteousness, justice, and fairness, to give practical knowledge to those who lack it, and to give knowledge and discretion to young people.

The book of Proverbs was written to help those who read it to live wisely. It is intended for people who are already wise and people who need to gain wisdom.

- These verses tell us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. What do you think that means?

Allow 2–3 students to share their thoughts.

Wise living begins with living in ways that honour God. This is what the book of Proverbs teaches us—how to live a life of obedience to God and how to live in ways that bring honour to Him.

The book of Proverbs is filled with advice on many topics. Here are some of the main ones:

Trust God. Wise living begins with trusting God and following His direction for your life. Because God is the source of all wisdom, His ways are always wise. The Bible tells us that when we ask God for wisdom, He will give it to us and give generously.

Use your resources wisely. Managing your resources well brings glory to God since everything we have belongs to Him. Resources include time, work, and money.

Treat others well. The book of Proverbs gives advice on how we should treat all types of people—from the poor to kings and leaders, and from those we love to those who mistreat us. The same guidelines apply to all people: treat them with honour.

Treat yourself well. You are created by God, and He loves you. The book of Proverbs tells us to avoid behaviours and attitudes that are bad for us. Instead, we are advised to choose behaviours and attitudes that are good for us. This helps us live wisely and bring glory to God.

Now we will read some proverbs aloud. After each, I will ask you which of these main ideas the proverb is talking about. Some of the proverbs might include more than 1 main idea, so listen carefully!

Have different students read each of the following proverbs aloud from the Bible. After each proverb is read, ask the students which theme it is talking about.

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

Proverbs 3:5–6

Teacher Tip: It may be helpful to remind the students of the 4 themes after you read each proverb. They are trust God, use your resources wisely, treat others well, and treat yourself well. If you have a blackboard or large piece of paper available, write the themes on it.

There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the LORD.

Proverbs 21:30

The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy.

Proverbs 12:22

Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.
Proverbs 12:25

The desire of the righteous ends only in good, but the hope of the wicked only in wrath. One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.
Proverbs 11:23–24

It is to one's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.
Proverbs 20:3

The one whose walk is blameless is kept safe, but the one whose ways are perverse will fall into the pit.
Proverbs 28:18

Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.
Proverbs 3:3–4

Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance.
Proverbs 1:5

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.
Proverbs 4:6–7

Knowing the right things to do is very helpful. That is knowledge. But wisdom is putting your knowledge into practice. Using what you have learned from Proverbs will help you to live wisely.

We are going to do that right now. I will read you 4 situations. After each, talk with a partner about how the person in that situation can respond wisely.

Give the students a minute to find partners.

Situation 1: Anna's father drinks a lot of alcohol. When he is drunk, he beats her. She often feels overwhelmed by anger and sadness. Sometimes she even gets angry with God and with her mother for allowing the abuse to happen.

- **What can Anna do to live wisely in this situation?**

Give the pairs 2–3 minutes to discuss their answers. Then invite 2–3 pairs to share their thoughts with the whole class. Repeat this process for each of the situations.

Situation 2: Jacob received a special award at school. He is proud of his accomplishment and tells everyone about it. Later, a good friend tells him, "You are acting proud about your award. I think it is causing others to think you are unkind and selfish." Jacob gets angry and thinks maybe his friend is jealous.

- **What can Jacob do to live wisely in this situation?**

Situation 3: Marisa's mother gave her money to buy food at the market. She picks out the fruit she was asked to buy and reaches into her pocket for the money, but it is gone.

- **What can Marisa do to live wisely in this situation?**

Situation 4: Enoch goes to a friend's house to visit, but his friend is not home. His friend's uncle who is there invites him to wait for his friend inside the house. His friend's uncle begins to touch him in ways that make him uncomfortable.

- **What can Enoch do to live wisely in this situation?**

We all need wisdom to help us handle everyday situations and overcome the challenges we face. The wisdom from God that is in the book of Proverbs can help us to know how to live wisely. It can also help us understand how God wants us to live.

3. Responding: Memorize a proverb to help with wise living.

We have heard lots of proverbs from the Bible in our lessons on wisdom. But until we know them and begin to live as they teach us to, we will not benefit from them the way God wants us to.

Memorizing Scripture can help us in many ways. The Bible is filled with wisdom that can help us to live wisely. Knowing God's Word brings us closer to God, and it helps us to use what we have learned. Now you will each choose 1 proverb to memorize.

I will read a few of the proverbs aloud again. Choose 1 you would like to memorize. It can be a verse that has special meaning to you or something you think will be useful in helping you to gain wisdom.

Read the following proverbs aloud slowly so the students can memorize them. Repeat them a few times, if possible, to help the students commit them to memory.

Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.

Proverbs 12:25

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
Proverbs 15:1

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*
Proverbs 3:5–6

Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.
Proverbs 16:3

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.
Proverbs 17:22

Optional:

If you have paper and pencils, the students can write the verses they want to memorize on paper to help with memorization. Suggest that they circle or underline the important words, draw pictures next to them, or think of hand motions to help with memorization.

If you are using the Student Pages, the teens can use these pages to memorize the verses.

End of Option

Give students a few minutes to memorize their proverbs. Then have teens sit in a circle and invite a few of them to share the verses they memorized. You can have the teens say the verses individually or have all the teens who memorized 1 proverb say that proverb together. Congratulate them for seeking wisdom.

Invite the students to say sentence prayers, asking God to help them to grow in wisdom and understanding so that they can live wisely. After a few minutes, close with a blessing based on Proverbs 3:13–14:

Blessing: May you search for wisdom, which is more valuable than silver and gold. As you continue to seek wisdom, may the Lord bless you with understanding and knowledge and help you to live wisely all the days of your life.

Family Connection: Encourage the teens to ask family members to share situations that require wisdom. The students can then share the proverbs they have memorized.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

"Agnus Dei" by Michael W Smith <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVFzxazTQNM>