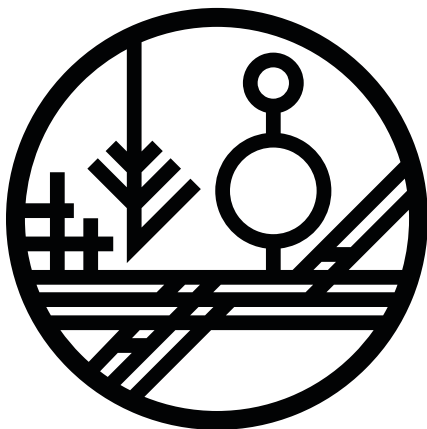




WISE WORDS



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WISE WORDS

Wise words. The Bible is full of them, because Jesus is wise and He wrote the book! Our challenge is to eagerly pursue Christ's wisdom and allow Him to change us. We think this pocket guide will be a helpful resource. Our hope is that through the wisdom of God's Word we can become a bit more like Jesus each day. We can then point others toward making the wisest choice possible, to trust in Jesus, the wisest man who ever lived.

FOR CHRIST,

Pastor James Granger

April, 2016

ABOUT FOOLISHNESS

FOOLS DESPISE WISDOM. This is because foolishness and wisdom are at odds with each other. Whether you are acting like a fool or a wise person in a given situation will be revealed in your speech, your actions, and your decision-making. It begins with your view of God. Are you embracing the wisdom that God provides, or are you living foolishly in your own understanding? We are fools when we ignore God and rely solely on our own judgment, which is why we should pursue wisdom as a valuable treasure that God gives generously to those who earnestly seek it.

WISE WORDS

ALL WISDOM IS FROM GOD. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. – Proverbs 1:7 ESV (see also Proverbs 2:6-12)

PURSUE WISDOM. Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth. – Proverbs 4:5 ESV (see also Proverbs 8:11)

ASK IN FAITH. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. – James 1:5 ESV

SEEK WISE COUNSEL. By insolence comes nothing but strife, but with those who take advice is wisdom.
– Proverbs 13:10 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

UNBELIEF FUELS FOOLISHNESS. The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good. – Psalm 14:1 ESV (see also Proverbs 12:15-16)

DON'T BE UNTEACHABLE. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. – Proverbs 1:7 ESV (see also Proverbs 18:2)

FOOLISHNESS IS CONTAGIOUS. Leave the presence of a fool, for there you do not meet words of knowledge. – Proverbs 14:7 ESV
(see also Proverbs 14:7-9, 14-15)

WATCH WHAT YOU SAY. A fool's lips walk into a fight, and his mouth invites a beating. A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul. – Proverbs 18:6-7 ESV (see also Proverbs 15:2-3)

GOSPEL WISDOM

It is foolish to live apart from Jesus. The wisest choice we can make is to trust God and put our faith in Jesus to save us from our foolish ways. God is not trying to hide this wisdom from us. He gives wisdom “generously to all without reproach.” (James 1:5) We should follow the example of Jesus and the apostles, who considered the Gospel message to be so important that they sacrificed their very lives in order to share this wisdom with others. The apostles worked hard and strategically engaged a culture that was prone to foolishness in order to share the wisdom of the Gospel.

OTHER WISDOM

Romans 1:22

1 Corinthians 1:18-25, 3:18, 4:10

James 1:5

Colossians 3:16

Introducing Christian Doctrine, by Millard Erickson

NOTES

ABOUT MONEY

GOD OWNS IT ALL. He created the universe, including the earth and everything on it, and He is the one who holds it all together. Our role is to “steward” God’s creation, including the specific material things that become our “possessions.” God has entrusted us with these resources to enable us to give, save, and live, with the ultimate goal of leveraging all of our stuff for the advance of the Gospel. Through the wisdom of God’s Word, we are to pursue a life of uncommon joy and generosity that points others toward Jesus.

WISE WORDS

GOD OWNS IT ALL [AND WE ARE CARE-TAKERS]. The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.

– Psalm 24:1 ESV (see also Psalm 50:10)

WORK IS GOOD. In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty. – Proverbs 14:23 ESV (see also Proverbs 12:27 and Proverbs 28:19)

GENEROSITY IS GOOD. Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed. – Proverbs 19:17 ESV (see also Proverbs 11:24)

SAVING IS GOOD. Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it. – Proverbs 13:11 ESV (see also Proverbs 28:20)

WISE WARNINGS

MONEY IS MORALLY NEUTRAL. LOVE OF MONEY IS SPIRITUALLY UNHEALTHY. The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.

– I Timothy 6:10 ESV

DEBT IS BAD. The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender. – Proverbs 22:7 ESV

STUFF DOESN'T SATISFY. He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. – Ecclesiastes 5:10 ESV

GREED IS A PROBLEM. A greedy man stirs up strife, but the one who trusts in the Lord will be enriched. – Proverbs 28:25 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

Money is a big deal in the Bible. Jesus talked about it all the time. Perhaps you've never thought much about the implications of your faith with regard to money, or maybe been very selfish in how you've handled your finances. Remember the Gospel. Jesus, the Creator and King of the universe, sacrificed His very life for our sins, including our sinful attitudes towards money. Going forward, be committed to Gospel generosity. That means giving money so the Gospel can be preached, as well as preaching the Gospel through your own generous lifestyle.

OTHER WISDOM

1 Chronicles 29:12-16

Matthew 19:16-30

Matthew 22:15-22

James 1:16-18

The Treasure Principle: Unlocking Life Change, by Randy Alcorn

Financial Peace University, daveramsey.com

Managing God's Money: A Biblical Guide, by Randy Alcorn

Your Money: Frustration or Freedom, by Howard Dayton

"I Don't Want to Win the Lottery", by Jen Pollock Michel in Christianity Today

NOTES

ABOUT SEX

SEX IS POWERFUL. God created sex to be enjoyed between a man and a woman within the context of a marriage. There is tremendous blessing and responsibility involved with sex, because it is through sex that God brings about new life. Sex is also intensely pleasurable and intimate, which magnifies its blessing within marriage but also its destructive power outside of the marriage relationship.

WISE WORDS

GOD CREATED SEX. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. – Genesis 2:24-25
ESV

MAKING BABIES IS GOOD. And God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it. – Genesis 1:28
ESV

SEX IS DELIGHTFUL. How beautiful and pleasant you are, O loved one, with all your delights! Your stature is

like a palm tree, and your breasts are like its clusters. I say I will climb the palm tree and lay hold of its fruit. Oh may your breasts be like clusters of the vine, and the scent of your breath like apples, and your mouth like the best wine.

– Song of Solomon 7:6-9 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

ADULTERY [SEX OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE] IS DESTRUCTIVE.

He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself. – Proverbs 6:32
ESV

STAY FAR AWAY FROM SEXUAL TEMPTATION. Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife. – Proverbs 6:27-29 ESV

DON'T ALLOW THE MARRIAGE BED TO GO COLD. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always with her love. – Proverbs 5:18-19 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

When it comes to sex the teaching of the Bible is pretty simple: one man, one woman, within one marriage. Sadly, because sex is so powerful and man is so sinful, this simple teaching often gets incredibly complicated. If you have made sinful sexual decisions, take heart. Jesus died for ALL sin, including those of a sexual nature. That means Jesus died for sins related to adultery, lust, pornography, sexual abuse, and countless others. Going forward, commit to the pursuit of holiness in your sexual life, so that whether you are single, married, or single again your life can be a Gospel example to those around you.

OTHER WISDOM

Song of Solomon

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Ephesians 5:22-33

Hebrews 13:4

Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon, by
Arnold Fruchtenbaum

*Sex and Money: Pleasures That Leave You Empty and
Grace That Satisfies*, by Paul Tripp

The Meaning of Marriage, by Tim Keller

Sheet Music: Uncovering the Secrets of Sexual Intimacy in Marriage, by Kevin Leman

NOTES

ABOUT POWER

ALL POWER ORIGINATES FROM GOD. By His power He created the world, spoke humans into existence, and provided salvation through His Son Jesus. Any power we possess as human beings is a gift from God that we ought to wield for His glory. God exercises His power in our lives through the presence and influence of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom of His Word.

WISE WORDS

GOD IS THE ULTIMATE POWER. Once God has spoken; twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God. – Psalm 62:11 ESV

GOD HAS POWER OVER LIFE AND DEATH. But I trust in you, O Lord; I say “You are my God.” My times are in your hand. – Psalm 31:14-15 ESV

GOD HAS POWER OVER NATURE. When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep,

when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth. – Proverbs 8:27-29 ESV

GOD USES HIS POWER TO SAVE. Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving might of His right hand. – Psalm 20:6 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

WE ARE NOT IN CONTROL. Then Job answered the Lord and said: 'I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. – Job 42:1-2
ESV

WORDS ARE POWERFUL. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. – James 3:5-6
ESV

ALL EARTHLY AUTHORITIES ARE ESTABLISHED BY GOD.

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. – Romans 13:1 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

The temptation to try to save ourselves or change ourselves through our own power is common to all of us. We are drawn to self-sufficiency and drawn to being in control. We must instead focus on the Gospel, specifically the person of Jesus Christ, as the only one who has the power to save and to transform. In addition, any time we receive power it's an opportunity for us to use it to love, serve, and bless others who might not have much. We must use the influence God has given us to help influence others toward the Gospel. Jesus is our example in this, as He was given all power and yet chose to serve and to sacrifice.

OTHER WISDOM

Job chapters 38 - 41

Romans 1:16

Colossians 1:15-23

Revelation 19:11 – 20:6

Gospel, by J.D. Greear

The Transforming Power of the Gospel, by Jerry Bridges

Rescuing Ambition, by Dave Harvey

NOTES

ABOUT PRIDE

GOD OPPOSES THE PROUD. That does not mean that God hates proud people, but rather that human pride is antithetical to the Gospel. This is because pride represents a higher sense of confidence in oneself than in God, and the core of the Gospel is trusting completely in Jesus to save. Humility is the opposite virtue from pride, because it emphasizes sacrifice, service, and ranking others as more important than oneself. The pursuit of humility will naturally reduce prideful tendencies in our lives.

WISE WORDS

HUMILITY DRAWS GOD'S GRACE. Therefore it says, 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. – James 4:6 ESV

HUMILITY LEADS TO BLESSING. The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life. – Proverbs 22:4 ESV

HUMILITY PRODUCES WISDOM. When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom. – Proverbs 11:2 ESV

GOD'S PRIDE FOR HIS PEOPLE IS VIRTUOUS. He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. – Psalm 47:4 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

PRIDE CAN CAUSE TENSION. Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice. – Proverbs 13:10 NIV

PRIDE IS DANGEROUS. Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. – Proverbs 16:18 ESV

PRIDE CAN PRODUCE HUMILITY. One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor. – Proverbs 29:23 ESV

BOASTING IS FROWNED UPON. Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches..." – Jeremiah 9:23 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

Pride is a Gospel issue. The human leaning toward trust in self is often the biggest barrier people face when they're confronted with the truth of the Gospel. In order to be saved by Jesus and transformed by Jesus, we must trust Him and submit our lives to Him. We can take great comfort in knowing that through Christ God forgives all sins, including the sin of pride. When we read a passage of Scripture that challenges or convicts us in an area of our lives, we must be willing to lay down our pride and walk in obedience. In this way God uses humility to transform our lives through the power of the Gospel, and our changed lives then become a Gospel example to others.

OTHER WISDOM

Daniel 2:1-4:37

John 13:1-16

Acts 12:1-23

Philippians 2:1-11

Humility: True Greatness, by C.J. Mahaney

Mother Teresa: An Authorized Biography, by Kathryn Spink

NOTES

ABOUT WORDS

WORDS MATTER. When we use words to preach the Word, God transforms lives. God's words are particularly powerful...don't forget that He spoke the world into existence! Our own words of grace and truth have the ability to provide tremendous encouragement and motivation to fellow believers. At the same time, words that are deceptive, divisive, or thoughtless can cause pain. The example of Jesus, the wisdom of the Bible, and the power of the Holy Spirit can transform our hearts such that the words that come out of our mouths can be used for God's glory.

WISE WORDS

GOD'S WORDS EDIFY. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
– 2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV

WORDS OF PRAISE. Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples! – Psalm 96:2-3 ESV

WORDS OF GRACE. A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. – Proverbs 15:1
ESV

WORDS OF TRUTH. There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment. – Proverbs 12:18-19 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

BE QUIET SOMETIMES. Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent. – Proverbs 17:28 ESV

NO SLANDER. The one who conceals hatred has lying lips, and whoever utters slander is a fool. – Proverbs 10:18 ESV

LYING IS DESTRUCTIVE. Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man? The steadfast love of God endures all the day. Your tongue plots destruction, like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit. You love evil more than good, and lying more than speaking what is right. – Psalm 52:1-3 ESV

DON'T BE CRUDE. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. – Ephesians 5:4 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

When it comes to our words our primary aim is to share the Gospel with as many people as possible. We can do this both directly and indirectly. We should always be looking for opportunities to speak the Gospel frankly, to tell others about Jesus. In addition, when we season the tone and content of our daily conversations with thoughtful intent, we present the Gospel in a different way. Conversely, our words can become a Gospel distraction when they are biting, untruthful, or unloving. We must ask God to give us the boldness to speak about Jesus and to help us use all of our words to help point people to Him.

OTHER WISDOM

Romans 10:5-18

Ephesians 5:25-32

2 Timothy 4:1-5

James 3:1-12

Christ Centered Preaching, by Bryan Chapell

Between Two Worlds, by John Stott

NOTES

ABOUT PLANNING AND TRUSTING

TRUST IS KEY. As we make plans and decisions in our lives, our trust for God should be first and foremost in our hearts and minds. The direction we receive from God's Word must always outrank our own desires and understanding. At the same time, trusting in the Lord does not mean we are free to be lazy or inactive or to lack diligence in how we carry out our lives. God wants us to use the wisdom He has given us to be strategic and smart in how we live in order to advance the Gospel to as many people as we possibly can.

WISE WORDS

GOD IS IN CONTROL. Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand. – Proverbs 19:21 ESV

CHOOSE TRUST. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. – Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV

TRUST TRUMPS FEAR. When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me? – Psalm 56:3-4 ESV

HAVE A PLAN. Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established. – Proverbs 16:3 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

INACTIVITY CAN BE SINFUL. Idle hands are the devil's workshop; idle lips are his mouthpiece. – Proverbs 16:27 TLB

AVOID ANXIETY. Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad. – Proverbs 12:25 ESV

DON'T BE LAZY. Go to the ant O sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise. – Proverbs 6:6 ESV

RUSHING IS NOT WISE. The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty. – Proverbs 21:5 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

We are at our best when we have a plan for how we want to share the Gospel with the world and then we trust God to do the heavy lifting. Jesus and the New Testament apostles were very strategic and intentional in their efforts to point people to God, and yet they faced obstacles and opposition along the way. They were undeterred and we should be as well. Often times our plans are interrupted, changed, or scrapped completely, and yet through it all God transforms lives. Have a plan to use your gifts to expand the Gospel, work to execute it, and trust God to work through you as He sees fit.

OTHER WISDOM

Genesis 1:1-2:25

Nehemiah 1:1-3:32

Luke 9:51

James 4:13-17

Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will, by Kevin DeYoung

Decision Making and the Will of God: A Biblical Alternative to the Traditional View, by Garry Friesen

The Master Plan of Evangelism, by Robert E. Coleman

NOTES

ABOUT LAZINESS

LAZINESS IS NOT WISE. God Himself is our example in work, having labored for six days in creating the world, creating us in His image, and continuing through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Because we are created in God's image, we are wired with the ability and desire to be creative and productive with our lives. Diligent, purposeful work is part of that process. At the same time, we must take care to establish the proper rhythm of rest that God also modeled for us, lest we become so consumed with work that we lose sight of the God we are serving.

WISE WORDS

WORK IS GOOD. Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense. – Proverbs 12:11 ESV

WORK TO GOD'S GLORY. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.
– Colossians 3:23 ESV

RHYTHM MATTERS. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.
– Genesis 2:2-3 ESV

GET MOVING. How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? – Proverbs 6:9
ESV

WISE WARNINGS

NO EXCUSES. The sluggard says, 'There is a lion outside! I shall be killed in the streets. – Proverbs 22:13 ESV

LAZINESS IS FRUITLESS. The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied. – Proverbs 13:4 ESV

WATCH YOUR SLEEP. A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man. – Proverbs 6:10-11 ESV

LAZINESS ENSLAVES. The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor.

– Proverbs 12:24 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

There has never been more difficult and meaningful work accomplished than the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Not a hint of laziness can be seen in the Biblical accounts of the life of Jesus. He worked hard. He served. He sacrificed His life. In addition, the New Testament apostles demonstrated the same level of effort, working tirelessly to bring the Gospel to the first century world. As with Jesus, when we read the book of Acts it is impossible to detect any trace of laziness in the lives of these early saints. The Gospel itself impels us to work hard and rest well so we can be intentional and effective in pointing others to Jesus.

OTHER WISDOM

Genesis 2:15-25

John 19

Ephesians 2:1-10

2 Thessalonians 3:10

Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work, by Tim Keller

Crazy Busy: A (Mercifully) Short Book about a (Really) Big Problem, by Kevin DeYoung

Your Life in Rhythm, by Bruce Miller

NOTES

ABOUT PLEASURE

PLEASURE IS FROM GOD AND FOR GOD.

As humans we have been wired by God to pursue satisfaction and to avoid pain. Unlike God, we tend to pursue pleasure more from earthly sources. Earthly pleasures can be very fulfilling because God has blessed us with enjoyable experiences on earth, but they can also be destructive when disconnected from God's commands. God Himself takes greater pleasure in eternal things. He delights in those who fear Him, love Him, and humble themselves before Him. In this sense there is a pleasure found in a relationship with God that goes beyond any carnal pleasure we might enjoy.

WISE WORDS

GOD'S DELIGHT. The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His steadfast love. – Psalm 147:11 ESV

DELIGHT IN GOD. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. – Psalm 16:11 ESV

DELIGHT FROM GOD. They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights. – Psalm 36:8 ESV

PLEASURE IN WISDOM. Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool, but wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding. – Proverbs 10:23 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

EXERCISE SELF-CONTROL. Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat. – Proverbs 23:20 ESV

PLEASURE CAN'T BE ULTIMATE. I said in my heart, 'Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.' But behold, this also was vanity. – Ecclesiastes 2:1 ESV

SIN IS PLEASURABLE. Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. – Proverbs 9:17 ESV

SEXUAL PLEASURE CAN BE A SNARE. Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress? – Proverbs 5:20 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

When enjoyed in the context of God's purpose, pleasure is a gift from our loving God to be enjoyed for His glory. Christians should enjoy sex within marriage, good food and drink in moderation, and healthy rhythms of work and leisure. The world needs to see Christians appropriately enjoying what God has created. This is because of greater importance than human pleasure is God's pleasure and His purposes in creating it. God's greatest delight is people who delight in Him. As we take pleasure in God and the things God has created, He will create opportunities for us to point others to the ultimate source of all pleasure, God Himself.

OTHER WISDOM

Song of Solomon

2 Timothy 3:1-5

1 John 2:16-17

Desiring God, by John Piper

Intended for Pleasure, by Ed and Gaye Wheat

NOTES

ABOUT POVERTY

MATERIAL POVERTY IS TRAGIC. One of the saddest realities of our world is when an individual or family lacks the ability to feed themselves and to meet their basic needs. The Church will often take the lead in helping the poor, since it's a repeated explicit command throughout Scripture to do so. God has a heart for those in need, and we ought to aggressively help the poor. At the same time, we cannot fall into the trap of attaching undue spiritual virtue to those who eschew material things (poverty gospel) or to those whose material wealth has increased (prosperity gospel).

WISE WORDS

GOD ADVOCATES FOR THE POOR. I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and will execute justice for the needy. – Psalm 140:12 ESV

BE GENEROUS. Whoever despises his neighbor is a sinner, but blessed is he who is generous to the poor. – Proverbs 14:21 ESV

INJUSTICE CAN CAUSE POVERTY. The fallow ground of the poor would yield much food, but it is swept away through injustice. – Proverbs 13:23 ESV

GET TO WORK. Love not sleep, lest you come to poverty; open your eyes, and you will have plenty of bread. – Proverbs 20:13 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

DON'T ABUSE THE POOR. Do not rob the poor, because he is poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate. – Proverbs 22:22 ESV

DON'T IGNORE THE POOR. Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse. – Proverbs 28:27 ESV

DON'T AVOID THE POOR. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. – James 1:27 ESV

DON'T JUDGE THE POOR. The rich and the poor meet together; the LORD is the maker of them all. – Proverbs 22:2 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

The only thing worse than material poverty is spiritual poverty. To not know Jesus, and to be apart from Him for eternity, would be worse than any physical earthly hardship. As such, there is one kind of poverty that we should seek. In Matthew 5:3 Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." A person who is poor in spirit is humble. They hold God in higher regard than themselves. They're willing to submit their lives to Jesus, who emptied Himself of everything in order to give His life for us. A person like that can look forward to a glorious eternal future with Jesus in the kingdom of heaven.

OTHER WISDOM

Matthew 25:31-46

Mark 12:41-44

Acts 6:1-6

2 Corinthians 8:9

When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself, by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert

NOTES

ABOUT ANGER

ANGER DIVIDES. Frequently our anger is directed toward another person and the consequence is a fractured relationship. When we are angry with each other we avoid each other, we sulk, and we certainly aren't likely to engage in Gospel work together. However, when we are angered by sin or injustice, this kind of anger is generally not sinful and it can often motivate us toward Gospel action. In the Bible, God Himself expressed anger at sin and at wicked people and the effect they were having others. Our own sinfulness and the brokenness of our world ought to grieve us and make us angry, especially when the result is injustice or affliction.

WISE WORDS

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS ANGER. God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels indignation every day. – Psalm 7:11 ESV

OUR RIGHTEOUS ANGER. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger. – Ephesians 4:26 ESV

BE SLOW TO ANGER. Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly. – Proverbs 14:29 ESV

USE SELF-CONTROL. A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back. – Proverbs 29:11 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

NO GRUDGES. Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. – Proverbs 19:11 ESV

ADDRESS ANGER QUICKLY. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. – Matthew 5:23-24 ESV

BEWARE THE INFLUENCE OF ANGRY FRIENDS. Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare. – Proverbs 22:24-25 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

In most cases anger is sinful, which means we need to deal with it like any other sin. Begin with confession, both to God and to those who have been affected by your anger. The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus died on the cross and has already paid the penalty for your sin of anger. If the sin of anger continues to plague you, choose one of the Bible verses above that warn against the pitfalls of anger and reflect on it regularly for a week or two. Ultimately, unrighteous anger is a Gospel distraction, so we are wise to ask God to change us by the power of His Spirit through the wisdom of His Word.

OTHER WISDOM

2 Samuel 12

Psalms 18

Matthew 5:21-26

John 2:13-16

James 1:19-20

Anger: Handling a Powerful Emotion in a Healthy Way, by Gary Chapman

NOTES

ABOUT FRIENDSHIP

WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER. God Himself is our example of this. He has always existed in community, one God in three persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are always together, always united, and always mutually accountable to one another. Some of the most important decisions we'll ever make in our lives will be who we choose to be friends with. This includes your choice for a spouse, and extends to the other people you'll be around on a regular basis.

WISE WORDS

GOOD FRIENDS MAKE US BETTER. Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another. – Proverbs 27:17 ESV

BE TRUTHFUL WITH YOUR FRIENDS. Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy. – Proverbs 27:5-6 ESV

HAVE SOME DEEP FRIENDSHIPS. A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. – Proverbs 18:24 ESV

FIND RIGHTEOUS FRIENDS. One who is righteous is a guide to his neighbor, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. – Proverbs 12:26 ESV

WISE WARNINGS

FOOLS MAKE DANGEROUS FRIENDS. Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm. – Proverbs 13:20 ESV

ANGRY PEOPLE MAKE DANGEROUS FRIENDS. Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways, and entangle yourself in a snare. – Proverbs 22:24-25 ESV

DON'T BE ALONE. Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!
– Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 ESV

IT MIGHT GET MESSY. A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. – Proverbs 17:17 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

In John 15:13 Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.” Jesus was the ultimate friend to sinners, willing to love his friends to the extent that He died on the cross for them. In this way our own friendships have Gospel implications. Our uncommon love for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ becomes a Gospel example to others. In addition, we should aim to build friendships with people who don’t yet know Jesus in order to show God’s love to them as well.

OTHER WISDOM

1 Samuel chapters 18–20

Ruth

John 13:1-17, 31-35

John 21

Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No to Take Control of Your Life, by Henry Cloud and John Townsend

The Four Loves, by C.S. Lewis

Spiritual Friendship, by Aelred of Rievaulx

NOTES

ABOUT THE WORD

THE BIBLE CONTAINS THE VERY WORDS OF GOD.

It is the only book where the author of the book, who is also the subject of the book, lives inside of the readers of the book in order to help them understand the book. Because God authored the Bible, we know we can trust it. There is no magic formula or secret password to gain access to the truth found in the Bible. We simply need to make the effort. We'd be crazy not to spend time reading the Bible and allowing it to influence the way we live. We have the very words of God at our fingertips. The Bible is right there waiting for us to study it, absorb it, and apply it to our lives.

WISE WORDS

CALL OUT FOR INSIGHT. My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding. – Proverbs 2:1-2 ESV

ABSORB THE WORD. I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. – Psalm 119:11 ESV

KEEP THE WORD. The end of the matter: all has been heard. Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or bad. – Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 ESV

GOD'S WORD IS FLAWLESS. The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. – Psalm 19:7-8
ESV

WISE WARNINGS

DISOBEDIENCE IS UNSAFE. How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. – Psalm 119:9 ESV

THE WORD CAN WOUND. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. – Hebrew 4:12-13 ESV

STAY HUMBLE. Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

– Proverbs 26:12 ESV

GOSPEL WISDOM

The entirety of God's Word is Gospel wisdom. It all points to Jesus, and Jesus Himself is the embodiment of God's Word. The Bible, therefore, is to be esteemed as the most excellent way to hear from God and to teach others about Jesus. When we preach about Jesus, we use the Bible to do so. When we want to emulate Jesus, the Bible is our resource. When we want God to change our hearts and minds toward Him, we must access the transforming power of the Gospel that is found within the pages of the Bible.

OTHER WISDOM

Psalm 119

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

2 Timothy 3:16-17

2 Peter 1:16-21

Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth, by Charles C. Ryrie

Proverbs: An Introduction & Commentary, by Derek Kidner

Proverbs: Wisdom that Works (Preaching the Word), by Raymond C. Ortland, Jr.

Living By the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible, by Howard G. G. Hendricks, William D. D. Hendricks

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