

The Keys To Wisdom

Love

Patience

Obedience

Mercy

Trust

Understanding

Truth

Discretion



Proverbs

WEEK 16

“The Marks of the Wise”

Study: Proverbs 20:1-4

Reading: Jeremiah 35:1-19, II Timothy 5:23, Genesis 9:18-27

Memory: Psalm 51:6

What Does the Bible Say?

The debate about believers drinking or not drinking fermented beverages is not a new one, but has been around for many years. Here we are given a strong warning against drinking fermented beverages which helps give great evidence for those who believe in total abstinence. Wine was made from grapes, while “strong drink” was most likely made from grain (similar to the beer of today). All of the “wine” drunk in the Bible days had some fermentation since grapes start to ferment the moment they are cracked open, but if the wine was made in the coolness of the day and was stored in a cool place, the amount of fermentation would be greatly reduced. People made wine differently and batches of wine were not always the same. In verse 1, we are warned against the drinks that were made to purposely give a “buzz” to those who drank it. The drinking of highly fermented beverages was discouraged because of all the negative problems that came with it. It would often “mock” those who partook in it since once they were unable to control themselves, problems were likely to occur. The wise man knew the dangers of fermented beverages and chose to avoid things that would cause drunkenness. In Bible days, if they wanted to drink something with flavor, they would need to drink wine, but today, with so many choices of unfermented drinks, my personal opinion is that there is little or no need to drink alcoholic beverages. The wise man knows what to avoid and though drinking alcohol is not directly prohibited, the wise man normally avoids or greatly limits alcoholic drinks because of the danger involved (vs 1).

The wise man avoids things that will be harmful for him and one of those harmful things comes through not obeying and honoring authority. Verse 2 specifically talks about what would happen when a person chose to be disobedient to a king or do something that would anger the king. Kings had the power to cause great punishment for disobedience and many kings would not hesitate to judge harshly. Though we don’t have kings over us today, they idea of kings often parallels a picture of authority.

Obedying and respecting our authorities will bring peace, while disobedience will often bring great harm (vs 2).

Wise men also choose to avoid arguing and fights. It is fools who insist on arguing or having their way. The fool does not know when to stop, but the wise man knows when to keep his mouth shut to avoid arguments. Though keeping your mouth shut or not reacting is very difficult, choosing to do so will be so much better for you than causing constant problems because of your arguing (vs 3).

Another mark of a wise man is that he is diligent when it is time for him to work hard. We all have different seasons in life and the wise man understands the seasons and makes the most of them. In Bible days, where most people farmed, it was common for lazy men to put off their planting during planting season which would result in no harvest during harvest time. Today, though most of us are not farmers, the same principle applies. When it is time to work, we need to take advantage of that time and do it with our whole hearts. Diligence is the mark of the wise and they will reap the rewards for choosing not to be lazy. The lazy person who does things half-heartedly might enjoy a few more immediate pleasures, but when it comes time to reap what he has sown, he will be greatly disappointed (vs 4).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Though I try my best to share what Scripture says and not my opinions, I want to take a moment today to give you my opinion. Though I don't believe the Scripture directly prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages, I personally do not believe it is wise. There are many, many problems associated with the drinking of alcohol in society and I don't believe there is any need for believers to support or be a part of this industry that causes so many problems. I do not judge those who have an opinion different than mine on this subject, however I do encourage all believers to carefully consider this matter and choose to make the choice that they believe God would have them to make concerning the drinking of alcohol in our society today.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for instructing you on how to be wise.*
- * *Ask God to help you live out a life of wisdom.*
- * *Praise God because He knows what is best for you.*

What is a mocker (vs 1)?

What is "strong drink" (vs 1)?

Who is not wise (vs 1)?

What do you think it means to be led astray by these things?

How do you think this Proverb should be applied in our society today where the consumption of alcoholic beverages is so common among believers and non believers?

What is the terror of a king compared to (vs 2)?

How would you define the terror of a king?

What could happen to a person if he made the king angry (vs 2)?

How do you think a verse like this can apply to your life today?

What will a man of honor often avoid (vs 3)?

Why do you think this is?

What do foolish people bring upon themselves (vs 3)?

Why do you think this is the case?

As you think of your regular interactions with people, in light of this verse, would you describe yourself as a fool or an honorable man? Explain.

What will the sluggard not do (vs 4)?

Why do you think it is important to understand the need to conduct ourselves the proper way in the different seasons of life?

What will be the end result of the sluggard not taking advantage of the right season?

“Patient, Fair and Honest”

Study: Proverbs 20:5-10

Reading: Matthew 5:1-12

Memory: Psalm 51:6

What Does the Bible Say?

Many people cover how they really feel and just involve themselves in surface relationships. There are very few people who express who they really are for fear of getting hurt or being rejected by others. This is why it is often difficult to truly help people because most of the time we discuss surface issues rather than heart issues. An effective counselor or minister has the ability to patiently lower his bucket deep into the well of another person’s soul to find out who they really are and what is truly going on in their hearts. Once that happens, it is much easier to help a person grow and change. The challenge for us is to be people of understanding who patiently help others so that we can bring out the best in the people that we befriend and minister with (vs 5).

It is much easier to talk about how loving and caring you are than to actually be loving and caring. We say to “call us anytime,” but when people call us it is easy to dread it or not want to answer the call. Yet, a faithful minister of Jesus Christ chooses to be faithful at all times, living out the commitments he or she has made (vs 6).

Many people strive to gain financial wealth so they have something to pass down to their children, yet some fail to realize that one of the greatest gifts they can give to their children is a spiritual inheritance. A love for God and a heart of righteousness will go farther in the life of your descendants than any amount of money that you could ever give them. Your children will have every opportunity to live a happy and fulfilled life when you give them a great head start by walking in righteousness (vs 7).

The person who is set on dealing with others in a fair and honest way has the ability to see when something is evil or unjust. Solomon says that the just leader “winnows” (ESV) evil with his eyes. The idea of winnowing is an agricultural term where the wheat (the good stuff) would be separated from the chaff (the bad stuff). When you live in wisdom and seek to deal fairly with others, you have a much better ability to discern between right and wrong (vs 8).

Verse 9 indicates that no one has the ability to say they are pure and clean from all sin. I John 1:10 says, “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” All men are sinners and that is why all men need their sin to be atoned for (vs 9).

The mention of unequal weights happens several times in the book of Proverbs and speaks of the negative practice of cheating others in the marketplace. The principle of godliness found in this verse reveals that we need to treat all men fairly and honestly and not try to cheat others for our personal gain (vs 10).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you willing to patiently get to know the hearts of others or do you settle with surface relationships. It takes time to find out who people truly are and what they truly think, but in order to help people and find fulfilling relationships, you need to be willing to go deep into a person’s heart. Sometimes this is much more difficult than others, but you have been called by God to truly love people. As you do this you will find that you have the ability to make a great difference.

Do you love others with more than words? Are you there when people need you to be or do you let your selfishness take control when people need help? Make it a desire of your heart to be a person who others can truly count on.

What are you passing down to those who come behind you? It is good to pass down lessons on how to work in this physical world whether it is money or talents, but you have the ability to pass down something that is so much better. By passing down truth, righteousness and godliness you have the great ability to affect generations to come.

Do you deal with others in a fair and honest manner? Do you find yourself cheating a little for your personal gain? When you deal with others, you should be honest and follow all the rules even if it means that it will cost you some money or you won’t make as much. God is the one who provides for all you need and, though being honest might cost you some money, God can easily give you more than you need when you do things the right way?

Thought for the day

What was the “purpose of a man’s heart” compared to (vs 5)?

What do you think Solomon meant?

What can a man of understanding do (vs 5)?

How do you think this can apply to your everyday life?

What do many people claim (vs 6)?

Why is it much easier to claim something than it is to back it up with actions?

Would you consider yourself a faithful man when it comes to loving others? Explain.

What do you think it looks like to be a righteous man who walks in integrity (vs 7)?

What blessings will this man receive (vs 7)?

Why do you think this is true?

How do you think a king “winnows” with his eyes (vs 8)?

****A king in those days was also a judge. He had the responsibility to sort through the evidence presented to find the truth.*

What does verse 9 teach (vs 9)?

Why is it important to realize that no matter how hard you try, you can not be sinless?

What hope do you have in life if you can’t earn favor with God by being good enough?

What are an abomination to the Lord? Why do you think the practice of deception is condemned many times in Proverbs?

“Your Actions Reveal”

Study: Proverbs 20:11-14

Reading: James 2:14-26, I John 2:1-6

Memory: Psalm 51:6

Many years ago, my wife decided to give running a try and experienced joint pain when she first started, just as I did when I started to get a little more serious about running. For me, I solved the problem by getting new running shoes that fit right. I decided to do the same for her and took her to a store that specialized in running shoes. The store representative spent a great deal of time in helping her find the exact right shoe for her body structure, arch height and running posture. (Yes it is actually more complicated than many people realize.) Though we had a gift certificate for another shoe store where I could have gotten the same shoes much cheaper, I decided that it would be cheating the worker and the store if I took his help but went and bought the shoes somewhere else. Though the worker might have not ever known, I have realized, as I have grown in wisdom, that getting the best deal is not always the best choice.

Today, one of the things we are going to see is how a wise shopper is honest and shops with integrity. He trusts God to provide the extra money it may cost him when He chooses to be honest in all his dealings.

What Does the Bible Say?

Constant references are made in the Scripture that declare that our actions truly reveal who we are much more than what we say about ourselves. The reason this is constantly emphasized is because we as humans tend to deceive ourselves into thinking we are something different than we really are. We like to talk the talk and think we are good and godly people, while our deeds could reveal something different. You will not be known for what you say about yourself, but will be known by your actions. If you really want to know who you are, ask others to give an honest evaluation of your life by what they see (vs 11).

The surface meaning of verse 12 is very easy to understand, though it might have a deeper meaning to it. If it goes along with verse 11, it reveals that what we say and what we do will be evident in the eyes of others. If

not associated with verse 11 it could simply be a challenge to us to use our senses to the fullest. A wise person listens and observes before He chooses to act (vs 12).

Constant challenges are given in the book of Proverbs about being diligent in all that you do. One of the areas of diligence has to do with getting out of bed when it is time to get up. This doesn't mean that you should go with too little sleep, but is discouraging continually sleeping in when there is work that needs to be done. In order to be organized and accomplish what needs to be accomplished, you need to be willing to get out of bed and get to work (vs 13).

Though sellers would often try to cheat buyers, there were a handful of buyers that would try to cheat the sellers. These buyers would go around at the market describing the poor workmanship of an item and offering a very low price for it. Though the seller didn't have to sell at that price, he at times would believe the buyer and give him an incredible deal. The buyer would then brag to others about his great deal, though it was gained dishonestly. This is still common in our days, though it may look a little different. Cheating on the coupons that are used and falsely representing ourselves are ways that we can be dishonest in our purchases today, whether in a store or online. As believers, we should be honest in all that we do even if it means it will cost us an extra few buck (vs 14).

How Does this Apply to Me?

What do your actions reveal about who you are? Do they show you are lazy and like sleep more than you should? Do they reveal that you are honest and that people can trust you in every area of life? Do they help others see who God is or do they just see another person who is constantly living for himself? It is easy to say you are something or even deceive yourself into thinking you are better than you really are. Your actions speak volumes to others, especially when who you say you are does not match up with how you act.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for acting exactly how He says He will.*
- * *Ask God to help you trust Him to take care of your needs.*
- * *Praise God because He is completely honest.*

How can a person know who a child is (vs 11)?

Why do you think the verse says "Even a child" (vs 11- ESV)?

What does the child reveal about himself (vs 11)?

What does this verses teach you about your actions?

Take time to evaluate your actions over this last week. What do they reveal about who you really are?

What two things has God made (vs 12)?

- 1.
- 2.

What do you think this verse is attempting to teach?

****Though there is no clear meaning given, my understanding of this verse is a challenge to all people to choose to listen and choose to look before making judgements. God has given us our senses and if we take time to use them to make proper observations, it will help us with life.*

What can lead to poverty (vs 13)?

What will help you be successful in life (vs 13)?

How do you know if you have the proper balance between not enough sleep and too much sleep?

What can buyers declare when seeking to buy something (vs 14)?

Why would they declare this?

Why would a buyer boast about what he just did (vs 14)?

****We don't see as much of this in our society today since most of what we buy has set prices. There is room to negotiate a fair price, but not to be dishonest about something in order to strike a better deal.*

“Practical Wisdom”

Study: Proverbs 20:15-19

Reading: Proverbs 6:1-5, Luke 14:25-35

Memory: Psalm 51:6

What Does the Bible Say?

Gold and gems have been extremely valuable for thousands of years partly because of their scarcity. Solomon stated that there is a great abundance of gold and precious stones compared to the amount of people who have lips that are full of knowledge. The challenge is for you to be a wise man who knows when to and when not to say things to others. When you choose to be wise in what you say, you will be more rare and precious than gold (vs 15).

Verse 16 discourages a wise man from becoming a co-signer or investing money in places he is not familiar with. “Surety” or “security” was the practice of saying you will pay another person’s debt if they are not able to pay it themselves. The point being made is that in the majority of cases, this man will not be able to make his payments and you will be stuck paying off another man’s debt (vs 16).

Something gained by dishonest gain might be a thrill to use or eat at first, but the person who gains it dishonestly will pay the price for his actions. The picture of bread being like gravel reveals how the punishment, whether caught or not, for dishonest gain will cause those things gained by deceit to eventually become harmful and unwanted by the person who gained them. Things gained through honesty and hard work on the other hand, will be valued for years to come (vs 17).

When you rush into something without taking advice from others, it will often turn into failure. A king who was going to wage war would gather his advisors together and discuss it carefully before he entered into battle. Failure to seek wise counsel would often end in defeat. No matter what you do today, it is very important to think through what you are doing, and when the choice is more major, gaining advice from others who are wise will save you a lot of trouble (vs 18).

Being friends with a person who slanders others is not wise or helpful for you. People who talk a lot are often gossips and choosing to listen to them will often lead you in a direction that is not good for you. Instead,

you need to avoid being friends with people who slander and you should choose to associate with the wise who know when to keep their mouths shut (vs 19).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you wise when it comes to the way that you use your words? Do you use your words wisely to build others up or do you tear them down? Taking a few extra seconds to think before you speak could save you years of pain and heartache, yet it is often a natural response to react before you think. Take time to evaluate the words you have said to others in this past week and see if you have been wise with your words.

Are you willing to take on the debt of another person? Taking on the debt of another could be investing in a business that you have not researched. It could be helping someone who gives you a good story about how they need your help. Though the verse talks about becoming a co-signer or taking on the debt of a stranger, it is often not good to take on the debt of a child or relative. It is often harder to say no to your relatives when they want you to co-sign for them, but when they fail to make their payments it adds great stress to your life and relationships. The better way is to teach those who want you to co-sign to learn to save and to avoid debt.

When you are honest and gain what you have through honest dealings and hard work, the items you gained will be much more enjoyable than items gained by unjust means.

Do you seek advice from others before you think or act, or do you act in haste? Making major choices and decisions on emotion rather than thinking through what you are doing can be a great detriment to your life and cause great problems. Choosing to think before you act will save you much grief and heartache.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the wise people he has given for your help.*
- * *Ask God to help you live in wisdom.*
- * *Praise God because He knows what is best for your life.*

Thought for the day

What does verse 15 say there is an abundance of (vs 15)?

What are the lips of a wise person compared to (vs 15)?

Why do you think the verse says that gold and precious stones are abundant?

What challenge is this verse presenting to you?

Why are you told to take a man's garment if they put up security for a stranger (vs 16)?

****Valuable clothing, especially thick outer coats (cloaks), were often used as a down payment which would be redeemed once the buyer brought the proper payment. By taking a man's coat, it meant that this man's word could not be trusted and there would need to be something tangible exchanged to guarantee the agreement.*

What is this verse encouraging you not to do (vs 16)?

What seems to be sweet at first when it is gained (vs 17)?

What are the end results (vs 17)?

What are ways that you are tempted to gain something through dishonest means?

How are wise plans established (vs 18)?

Why do you think it is often easy to jump into something without seeking wise counsel?

How can you practically apply the truth of this verse to your daily life?

Who reveals secrets that are meant to be hidden (vs 19)?

Who are you not to associate with (vs 19)? How do you know if a person fits this category?

“Principles of Daily Wisdom”

Study: Proverbs 20:20-24

Reading: Luke 6:27-36, 16:1-14

Memory: Psalm 51:6

Having run a small business on the internet has given me several opportunities to make the choice between honesty and dishonesty. One of the choices that presented itself often happened when people ask you to sell something for a cheaper price by selling it “offsite” so we can avoid having to pay the internet site commission. When you sell through an internet sight like Ebay, it is against their rules for someone to buy something from you without going through their checkout. They charge a certain percentage of your final sale since they hosted your item and advertised for you. It is only fair and right to give them a portion, but the idea of pocketing that commission money is enticing at times. Though it might cost me some money, I would remind myself that God could take care of any money I might lose by doing things honestly.

What Does the Bible Say?

Honoring and respecting parents is one of the constant themes of the book of Proverbs. Respect for authority, good or bad, is a must for any wise person. Though some parents are not the best example of love and care, a wise man realizes it is best for him to show respect and honor to his parents. He does this knowing it is a command of God and knowing that he will be much better off for it (vs 20).

Statistics reveal that in many cases people who win the lottery or come into a large sum of money during a short time normally end up in a worse condition than they were before they had money. Part of the reason for this is because they never learned how to handle money wisely when they had little and those bad habits continued even though they had much more. People are normally better off when they slowly work their way through life, increasing in riches a little at a time (vs 21).

The attitude of revenge is a very dangerous one. It is easy to take matters into our own hands when we have been wronged and to try to “get even” with others. This “getting even” doesn't bring true satisfaction and most of the time leads to further problems. The better way is to choose to let it go and allow God to take care of the situation. He will do what is

right and just, but He might not do it in your timing, though you can trust His timing and His way much more than you can trust yours (vs 22).

Again in verse 23, we are reminded about how much God hates deceit and dishonesty. God desires justice and integrity when we have business dealings with others. Cheating others for our own personal gain reveals a lack of trust in God. Human thinking says that you can get ahead by cheating, but a true understanding of God and the supernatural realm will reveal that God is the one who can truly cause you to prosper (vs 23).

Trying to figure out exactly what to do in life and what direction would be best is very difficult. This is mainly because we can't see the future and are unsure of what affects our choices will have. The great solution to this is to choose to follow what God wants for your life. His way will always be much better, though you can normally only see what is directly in front of you. If you follow His way and plan for your life step by step, you will find yourself in the center of His will which is the best thing for your life (vs 24).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How do you treat your parent? Even if your parents are no longer living you can still respect them by the way you talk about them to others. If they are alive, you can show them honor and respect by loving them. Sometimes this is easier than others, but practically it is not criticizing them, not making fun of them, but reaching out to them with words of encouragement and acts of love.

Are you learning how to be faithful with a little, or do you think that having more will solve all your problems? When you realize that God has given you all that you need for this moment it will help you become content and trust in Him rather than in what you think riches will do.

Do you find yourself living with a revengeful heart? Do you want to get back at those who hurt your or are you trusting in God to take care of things? Better yet, are you following the command of Jesus to love your enemy and care for those who hurt you?

Are you honest in all of your personal and business practices? Do you tend to cheat just a little on your taxes or take advantage of others who have poor accounting practices? It is easier to do than you may realize, but important for you to choose to be honest in all your dealings.

Are you looking to God to direct your paths or are you trusting in your choices? Seeking His will and His way for your life is the best choice.

What was the punishment for cursing a father or mother (vs 20)?

What do you think this punishment meant?

****This is probably a general term for destruction rather than a specific happening.*

Why would a person be tempted to curse their parents?

What are ways that you can curse your parents today?

What are ways that you can bless your parents today?

What happens to an inheritance that is gained too quickly (vs 21)?

Why do you think it will not be blessed (vs 22)?

Does this mean we should not leave an inheritance for our children?

****This seems to be more a reference to the gaining of wealth that we can leave for an inheritance, though there needs to be wisdom when passing down wealth to the next generation.*

What are an abomination to the Lord (vs 23)?

What are not good (vs 23)?

What was the practice of unequal weights?

How can this idea be carried over to our society today?

What are from the Lord (vs 24)?

What are people not able to understand (vs 24)?

What do you think this verse is teaching us about the difference between our plans and God's plans?

“A Wise Leader”

Study: Proverbs 20:25-30

Reading: II Timothy 3:10-17, I Corinthians 9:24-27

Memory: Psalm 51:6

What Does the Bible Say?

The Old Testament Law described how a person could declare something to be “holy” and it would be set apart only to be used for purposes relating to the worship of God. This could be an item, money or time. Once a vow was made, it could not be taken back and the person making the vow was “stuck” with the choice that they made. This is why Solomon encouraged a person not to declare a vow too quickly. It is easy in times of great joy or times of distress to offer something to God without first thinking through the whole issue. Decisions that are entered into quickly will often be to the detriment of the decision maker because they end up regretting the choices that they have made. This can be seen today by some who vow to be missionaries after a moving missions presentation, or a person vowing to give a certain amount of money because of a moving experience. It could be just a choice or decision to work in a ministry that needs help. All of these are good things, but if they are not thought through and decisions are rashly made, it will often end in regret (vs 25).

A wise leader is a leader who understands who is there to help him and who is there to be a hindrance to what is right. He separates the good from the evil and makes sure those who are evil don’t have the ability to rise to power. He is discerning in his choices and decisions (vs 26).

Just as a lamp reveals what is hidden in the darkness, the Lord has the ability to see into the heart of man. This can be good or bad depending on where your heart is. People can deceive others with their outward works and actions, but no one can deceive God because He sees what is truly in the heart (vs 27).

A wise leader will rule over those who have been placed under his care with love and faithfulness. He will not be over consumed with himself, but he will be concerned about the affairs of those he leads. He doesn’t give up on others when they fail him, but faithfully leads them in the direction that they should go (vs 28).

When a person is young, he often has great energy and strength to

accomplish many tasks. When a person is older, he might not have the spunk or strength of youth, but he has gained wisdom over time. Both strength and wisdom are needed to accomplish most tasks and one should not despise the other. They are both stages in life that God has given to help men bring great glory to Himself (vs 29).

True change is not always easy. It often is very painful, but the process of pain will often produce wonderful results. There will be times where tough words will have to be said or received in order to get the results that are desired. Seeing ourselves for the sinners that we really are is often very painful because we want to think we are good people, but when we are confronted with our flaws and see our sinfulness, it helps us take steps to truly change (vs 30).

How Does this Apply to Me?

When you make decisions do you tend to make them too quickly? Do you make decisions based on your emotions or after you have taken time to pray and think through something? It is easy to let your emotions get carried away, but many times they will carry you into places that you really don’t want to go.

Are you a wise leader in the areas of leadership God has given you? Do you carefully choose who to listen to and what you allow to go on in your sphere of influence? Do you love those under you with a steadfast love that chooses to help people, or do you find yourself only concerned with your plan and what you would like to accomplish?

Do you look down on those who are older than you because it seems that they don’t “do” anything? Do you look down on those who are younger than you because it seems like they don’t always use wisdom? You should not look down on others because of their age or position in life, but realize that God allows us to do different things in different ways. Choose to let the differences become strengths and not to allow them to become stumbling blocks.

Are you willing to open yourself up to see who you truly are? Many people don’t change because they don’t want to go through the painful process of seeing the reality of their sinfulness. Being confronted with who you are is often very painful, but it is that confrontation that will bring about true and lasting change. Be willing to open yourself up to wise and loving friends to help you see your flaws and be willing to change.

What are rash vows compared to (vs 25)?

Why do you think they are compared to this?

What is this verse teaching?

Describe a time where you or someone you knew made a rash vow. How did it turn out?

What are areas where you are tempted to make a commitment without thinking through the full commitment?

What does a wise king do (vs 26)?

Why do you think a king would “drive the wheel” over someone (vs 26 - ESV)?

****This was a grinding wheel used to crush wheat before it would be tossed up (winnowed). It was the process of separating the good parts of the grain from the chaff (parts that were not used for anything).*

What does God have the ability to do (vs 27)?

Why is it important to realize that God knows what is in the innermost parts of you?

What helps keep a king on his throne (vs 28)?

How do you live out these characteristics in your life?

What are great benefits of young men (vs 29)?

What are the great benefits of older men (vs 29)?

What do you think verse 30 means?

How have your trials and difficulties shaped you?

Memory Verses

Psalms 51:1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.