

The Keys To Wisdom

Love

Patience

Obedience

Mercy

Trust

Understanding

Truth

Discretion



Proverbs

WEEK 4

“The Six Sins”

Study: Proverbs 6:16-19

Reading: Psalms 73:1-28

Memory: Isaiah 40:19

When I taught school, there were a few students who would be the first suspects when ever anything wrong had been done. I found myself occasionally accusing those students wrongly because I just assumed it was them, even though sometimes they had nothing to do with it. When I did accuse these students of something they didn't do, they would be come angry at me for accusing them. What they didn't realize is the reason that they were being accused in the first place was because of their reputation they had earned for themselves by doing wrong.

The reason that this happened is because those students were one of the types of people described in today's passage. They were the type who were quick to find evil wherever it was taking place.

What Does the Bible Say?

When Solomon used the numbers six and seven, he used what is called the “X+1” method of introducing a list. This method introduces the six aspects of a certain sin. The seventh sin could be a sin in and of itself, but it could also be the end result of the first six sins. This method is used to draw attention to the process and results of sin. This list gives things that God despises, partially because He knows what those sins do to others.

The first sin that Solomon mentioned was a “proud look” or “haughty eyes”. This is not just the outward appearance, but it is the sin that begins in the heart. This is the person who thinks that they are better than their neighbor, and even if they know they're not, they pretend that they are.

The second is a lying tongue. Lies can destroy a person's reputation and the testimony of Christ. The result of lying is distrust. Distrust eats away at the very core of a Christian's faith because faith is based on trust. God never lies, and He doesn't want His children to lie either.

The third one appears to be a reference to murder and taking the life of an innocent person. The Old Testament law described how those guilty of

murder were to be killed. This verse is not referring to taking the life of a murderer, but is directed towards the person who sheds the blood of those who are innocent.

The fourth sin Solomon mentioned condemns evil thoughts. This verse implies that God knows every thought of man. This sin deals with a person who is always devising how to carry out wicked schemes. Even if he never acts out on what he has devised, the plan to carry out wickedness is an abomination to God.

The fifth sin can get a person into a lot of trouble. That is the sin of finding evil. God doesn't want His children seeking after evil desires and being enthralled with evil things. We should guard our thoughts and our actions to make sure we are chasing after good.

The sixth sin dealt with rebuked the person who is a hypocrite. He is one who gives a false testimony about who he is. It is the person who knows how to talk the talk when he is around other believers, but walks a different walk when he is with his friends.

When people are guilty of these sins, they stir up anger and dissension in the church and community. These sins don't just affect their own spiritual walk, but they often destroy the spiritual lives of others.

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you fit into any one of the six categories that were mentioned? If you find yourself continually practicing one or more of these sins, remember that God hates these sins. You need to confess your sin and take steps to remove the wrong actions or attitudes from your life. When you follow God's way, you will not stir up strife and anger in others.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for telling you how you need to live.*
- * *Ask God to reveal any sin in your life.*
- * *Praise God because He cannot tell a lie.*

Thought for the day

List the seven things the Lord hates found in these verses. For each one, give a brief explanation, then a practical example you have seen.

1.
Definition:

Practical example:

2.
Definition:

Practical example:

3.
Definition:

Practical example:

4.
Definition:

Practical example:

5.
Definition:

Practical example:

6.
Definition:

Practical example:

7.
Definition:

Practical example:

“Parental Wisdom”

Study: Proverbs 6:20-25

Reading: Proverbs 6

Memory: Isaiah 40:19

One of the things that my parents taught me from a young age was the importance of giving to the Lord. At times, I didn't want to tithe on part of my birthday money or money that I had earned. I wanted to keep all that money for myself. I am so thankful that they didn't care what I thought about giving and they strongly encouraged me to give to the Lord. Because of their wisdom in this area, I have experienced God's blessings over the years in many different ways. There have been several times in my life where I haven't had enough money to pay my bills and give an offering, but the Lord has always provided for both. I have learned so much about my great God because of the faithfulness and wisdom of my parents.

Today, we are going to see that our parents can teach us many wonderful things. Though no parents are perfect, many people have been gifted with great parents who can speak into the lives of their children far after they are gone from this earth.

What Does the Bible Say?

As we study Proverbs, we will find that Solomon will often repeat himself in different ways. He did this to emphasize the points that he was attempting to make. Here, in this passage, we see that he began with an introduction that was similar to the first few verses of chapter 3. He wanted everyone of his readers to realize how important it was to follow his teaching on wisdom.

Mothers and Fathers are one of the greatest sources of wisdom. Even if one or both parents are unsaved, there is still wisdom to be gained from them. Sometimes, wisdom is best learned by listening to them as they give advice, and other times it is learned from the mistakes that they have made. Every piece of advice should be listened to and thought through carefully. We should take each bit of wisdom that we learn and hold tight to it. We should act out the knowledge that we have gained from them (vs 20-21).

Wisdom should be present in every area of our lives. Wisdom will be as a lamp that guides our steps on a dark and foggy night. The correction that wisdom will bring into our lives will help us have a full and peaceful life (vs 22-23). When wisdom is always present in our lives it will keep us from falling into sexual temptation. Remember that wisdom causes us to think through every situation and look at the end results. When we see the end result of sexual sin, it will help us to resist temptation. Wisdom will help us to avoid the temptation in the first place. Avoiding the temptation is your best defense for fending off the traps of the devil (vs 24-25).

How Does this Apply to Me?

What have you learned from your parents? If your parents are still alive do you listen to their advice? Do you try to live out the good things that your parents taught you? Often we reject the very things that will help us the most in life because of our pride. It doesn't matter how old you become, you can always learn from your parents, even when they have passed on to eternity. A wise man will look back on the advice that his parents gave him and the example that they set for him. I understand that the example won't always be the best in every situation, but you can still learn. Take the actions and the words that your parents have given you and compare them to the directions found in the Word of God. Remember that wisdom is not just knowledge, but it is using that knowledge to better understand different situations. Once you have an understanding of a situation, you can then make the wise decision or action.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the parents that He has given you.*
- * *Ask God to help you to become a wiser person.*
- * *Ask God to help keep you away from the temptations of evil.*

Thought for the day

What are you to keep (vs 20)?

Does this mean you always have to do everything your parents tell you to do even when you are an adult? Explain.

What should you not turn away from (vs 20)?

Why do you think that the teachings from both your father and mother are important?

How can you practically carry out these verses if your father and/or mother were not wise people?

What are you to do with the teaching of your parents (vs 21)?

Are you literally supposed to do this? If not, what does this mean?

What three ways will the truth that your parents passed down help you (vs 22)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What will the commandments be (vs 23)?

Why was it very important to have a light directing your path (vs 23)?

What does the end of verse 24 mean?

What is one of the areas where listening to your parents will help you (Vs 24)?

Why do you think that most parents express a great concern over their children's moral choices?

What are you no to do (vs 25)?

“Fire Will Burn”

Study: Proverbs 6:26-29

Reading: Matthew 5:27-32, II Samuel 12:1-20

Memory: Isaiah 40:19

When I was in college, I was never a big fan of events or programs that required me to dress up and sit through some type of presentation. The one thing that often made these programs bearable is that many used lit candles as table decorations. I found myself playing with this fire on more than one occasion during a program. I remember one time when I was throwing things into the wax of the candle causing them to spark when they touched the flame. After the candle had been burning for a while, it became harder to see the sparks since the flame was lower than the wax walls. I moved the candle closer to me and put my face a little too close to the candle. When the objects caused the flame shoot up a little higher than I had been expecting, it burnt the ends my eye lashes.

Today, we are going to see how we will get burnt when we play with fire. No, Solomon wasn't talking about actual fire, but he was using it to illustrate the power and destruction of sinful lust.

What Does the Bible Say?

Solomon continued to warn us about the problems that occur when we give into our sinful lusts. He said that adultery can lead to the loss of all that is valuable to you in life. By using bread, he was saying that a man can lose his possessions when he gives into his lustful thoughts. Not only can he lose his physical possessions, but he can also lose everything that he holds dear to him, including his family (vs 26).

Solomon used some powerful metaphors to describe the dangers and consequences of sexual sins. He used a phrase that would be similar to our modern day phrase, “If you play with fire, you're going to get burned.” Many affairs start with little sparks that a person thinks he can control. Many singles lose their virginity because they think that they won't give into their sexual desires. It often begins with something as simple as holding hands or becoming overly flirtatious. God has given men and

women a natural desire for sexual things. That spark should only be ignited in the bounds of a marriage. If not, that spark could easily ignite into a lustful fire that causes people to do things they know they shouldn't (vs 27-28).

Sexual sins will not go unpunished. Just as a person would get burned if they were playing with fire, we will face the consequences for our actions if we mess around with sexual sins. Solomon knew that sexual sins began in the mind and were carried out with the body. The first step, after the thought, is the first touch. This doesn't mean that if we just touch a member of the opposite sex that we are adulterers, but if we touch them in such a way that causes sexual thoughts in them or us, then we become guilty of sexual sin. Sexual thoughts or sexual touching outside of marriage is condemned by God (vs 29).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Have you given into the world's philosophy about sex and physical contact? Do you think it's okay to touch a member of the opposite sex because you care about them? My view may sound old fashioned, but I believe it can be supported by the Bible. When physical contact that occurs outside of marriage, no matter how small, causes lustful thoughts or is done in a way to fulfill pleasures outside the bounds of marriage, it is wrong. You need to determine where you are going to draw the line before you get into a situation where you have to make that decision. Don't make the mistake of thinking that you can control your sexual desires. Remember that God says that when you play with fire, you will get burned. You will have to face the consequences for your sexual sins.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for making you a sexual creature.*
- * *Ask God to help you avoid sexual temptations.*
- * *Praise God because He doesn't overlook sin, yet He will forgive.*

Thought for the day

What had Solomon warned about in verse 25?

What do you think the beginning of verse 26 meant?

****Verse 26 is not supporting prostitution or sex before marriage, but does indicate that the consequences of having sexual relations with a married woman are often far greater than having sex with a single woman. Both will be harmful and cost you something, but when a marriage relationship is involved, the pain and the hurt go way deeper.*

What will fire do (vs 27)?

Why do you think Solomon compared sexual sin and temptation to a flame (vs 27)?

How have you seen sexual temptations turn into a great fire?

What will happen when a person walks on hot coals (vs 28)?

Why do you think this was used as an illustration against giving into sexual temptation?

What does it mean to "go into his neighbor's wife" (vs 29 - ESV)?

Why will this sin not go unpunished (vs 29)?

Why do you think people still choose to do this even though they know there will be consequences?

How have you seen this true in your lives or the lives of others around you?

How have you faced sexual temptation in your life?

How have you found victory?

What are ways that you can help others have victory?

“You Will Pay”

Study: Proverbs 6:30-35

Reading: Psalms 38:1-8, 51:1-17

Memory: Isaiah 40:19

One of the core desires of all people is to be loved and accepted. Sadly, I have seen many homes where the children do not feel loved and they seek to find it somewhere else. This often leads many children, especially girls, to seek after this love elsewhere. I have found that girls who have not grown up with a loving and caring father who provides them with the emotional support that they need, are much more likely to commit sexual sins than the girls who grow up with an affectionate father. Because they want the love of a male figure, they will often give their bodies away in exchange for what they feel is love. Most of the time, they don't want to commit sexual acts, they just want to feel loved. They soon find out that most boys will say they love them, but all they want to do is fulfill their sexual desires.

Today, we are going to see how sexual sin is never right. Even if we think that we need the love or closeness that is involved in sexual relations, it is never right to step out of God's will.

What Does the Bible Say?

Over the centuries, there have always been people who have not had enough money to put food on their table. This often results in stealing food from others. Though we all feel sorry for the person that stole to satisfy their hunger, it was not right for them to steal. Just because a person thinks that they need something, doesn't give them the right to take it if it doesn't belong to them. Solomon compared the adulterer to a thief. Many married people are disgruntled with their spouses at home so they go out and commit adultery. Many teenagers have been deprived of love at home so they think that having sex outside of marriage will fill the void left because they didn't get enough love from one or both of their parents. Both married people and single people try to justify their actions by saying that they needed that love since they weren't getting it from the proper place. They will say there is

nothing wrong with sex outside of marriage because it is meeting their needs. Solomon said that a thief must face the punishment for his sin, even if he thinks that his act was justified (vs 30-31).

When a person falls into sexual sins, they don't often think about the consequences. Sexual sins will bring great pain and misery to a person's life. It may be enjoyable for a short while, but it will cause great difficulties (vs 32). Even when a person has been forgiven, their relationships will never be the same. Though God can give victory and His grace will cover your sin, the physical consequences of sexual sin are far reaching (vs 33).

Verses 34-35 refer to the husband of the wife who has committed adultery. No matter what is done to try to appease this hurt and anger, there will be a continual struggle because of the acitons that were committed.

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do sexual relations outside of marriage appeal to you? Do you find yourself thinking or day dreaming about sexual acts? Solomon spent almost all of chapter 6 warning you of the problems and difficulties you will face if you give into your sexual desires. The pleasure of sexual sin lasts for a moment, but the scars will remain for a lifetime. Next time you find yourself in a position of temptation, pause to think about the results that your action will have. Think of how it will affect your spouse or your future spouse. Ask yourself if the ruin and destruction that sex outside of marriage brings is worth the moments of pleasure. Even if you have been deprived of love, you have no excuse to seek it from a source that God has said is wrong. As was mentioned yesterday, the best way to resist sexual temptation is to avoid it in the first place. Don't put yourself into situations where you will be tempted to sin.

Suggestions for Prayer

* *Ask God to give you the wisdom you need to save yourself for your marriage partner.*

Thought for the day

Why do people often have a soft spot in their hearts towards those who steal to stay alive (vs 30)?

What happens when that thief is caught, even though some may understand why they did it (vs 31)?

What do you think it means that they will pay “sevenfold” (vs 31 - ESV)?

What will a person lose if he is caught stealing (vs 31)?

What do you think these verses are doing in the middle of the context about adultery (vs 31)?

What is stated about the person who commits adultery (vs 32)?

What does that person bring upon himself (vs 32)?

What will the adulterer receive (vs 33)?

How have you seen this happen to people in life?

What will not be wiped away (vs 33)?

What do you think that means?

****Though the sin can be forgiven by God and even by the offended spouse, the consequences will not go away. It is something that can't be easily forgotten or overlooked.*

What brings great fury (vs 34)?

How will a spouse, especially husbands, respond when they find out their marriage partner cheated on them (vs 34)?

What do you think the beginning of verse 35 means?

What will the offended person refuse (vs 35)?

“The Foolish Man”

Study: Proverbs 7:1-27

Reading: Read through Proverbs 7 one more time

Memory: Isaiah 40:19

One of the most interesting things that many people do is talk to the TV. I have done this when I have watched a scary movie and one of the actors was about to walk into a situation that was going to harm him or her. I try to tell the actor not to go into the house or the room where the evil man is waiting to do harm. They never listen to me though. They usually do the foolish thing and get themselves in trouble.

I used to think that people would never make those foolish decisions in real life, but then I have realized that people, including myself, do some foolish things. Often, we are just like that actor who is about to walk into a bad situation. God is trying to tell us, through His Word and godly counsel, that we are going to make a foolish decision, but we often do it anyway. Today, we are going to see that wisdom will help us avoid the dangers of foolishness and the destruction that sin will cause in our lives.

What Does the Bible Say?

Solomon again instructed us to pay attention to what he had written. He knew how valuable it would be to obey what he had written. He also reminded us to treasure the commandments that God has given us in our hearts (vs 1). We are not living life to its fullest until we keep the commandments God has given us. As we have seen already in Proverbs, God promises to those who seek after Him an abundant life. The phrase “apple of your eye” refers to the pupils in our eyes. We need to protect the truth in our lives, just like we protect our eyes from being damaged (vs 2).

Earlier in Proverbs, Solomon used the term “bind them about your neck” with the phrase “write them upon the table of your heart”. This time, instead of using the neck, he used the finger. He tells you to wrap God’s truths around your finger. Both expressions are similar and portray the point that we need to hold God’s Word as close as possible. In a sense, we should become one with God’s Word so that it can be carried out on a daily basis

in our lives (vs 3).

When we call wisdom our sister and understanding our close friend, we are making these things extremely important in our lives (vs 4). The result of being wise and understanding will be a godly life that stays away from sin. We all will fall at times, but the wiser we are, the more we will avoid temptation in our lives (vs 5).

In verses 6-23, Solomon gives a vivid illustration of a man that has fallen prey to an adulteress woman. Not only does this woman represent sexual sin, but the same principle and illustration applies to the enticement that Satan uses to tempt us into all types of evil.

Solomon warned us not to give into the temptations of Satan. The end of his paths lead to pain, misery and destruction. He told us that many people have fallen victim to the lies of Satan and the lies of evil men. That is why we need wisdom. This wisdom will protect our lives from evil (vs 24-27).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Have you found yourself playing the part of the fool? Have you naively let yourself slip into the lies and temptations of Satan? Are you seeking to be a wise person? Do you place great value on wisdom in your life? Many people will not spend time with God and study the Word simply because it is not that important to them. One thing that will always be true in life is that we will make time for what is important to us. When you place wisdom on the back burner and just read your Bible when you have time to get to it, you are setting yourself up for a fall. Many times we don't realize how our actions are affecting our spiritual lives because we don't know the truth of the Word of God.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Ask God to help you read His Word everyday.
- * Thank God for the freedom that He gives you through His Word.
- * Praise God because He knows what is best for your life.

Thought for the day

What should we do with the commandments that are given (vs 1)?

What will happen when we keep the commandments (vs 2)?

What is the practical application of verse 3?

What should we call wisdom (vs 4)? Why?

What will wisdom do (vs 5)?

What type of person did Solomon picture (vs 6-7)?

What was this young man doing (vs 8-9)?

What type of woman did the simple man meet (vs 10-11)?

What does this woman do to the simple man (vs 12-13)?

What do you think verse 14 means?

****She had meat that needed to be eaten which was similar to inviting someone over for grilled steaks or a gourmet meal.*

What enticement did the woman use (vs 15-17)?

What offer did she make (vs 18-20)?

Why was the man persuaded (vs 21)?

How is the man described (vs 22-23)?

What are we commanded to do (vs 24-25)?

What has this type of woman done to others (vs 26)?

What path does she lead the simple man down (vs 27)?

“Godly Speech”

Study: Proverbs 8:1-11

Reading: Luke 6:37-49, Psalms 63:1-11

Memory: Isaiah 40:19

Several years ago, I received a phone call from a man who didn't think one of the children's activities that we were doing was biblical. I talked to him for a few minutes and allowed him to explain his position. After listening, I told him that I didn't agree with him and thanked him for his input. He wanted to talk to me longer so he could change my mind. This began to frustrate me and at that time I had a choice. I could get upset at him, because he was getting upset at me or I could lovingly tell him “Thank you” and that I appreciated him calling. I chose the latter because I wanted him to know that just because we disagreed didn't mean that we should have any type of animosity towards each other.

Today, we are going to see how a wise person has learned to control his tongue because he has learned to see others as God sees them.

What Does the Bible Say?

In Chapter 8, Solomon contrasted the dark, unnoticed corner where the harlot was standing in chapter 7, with the public proclamation of wisdom. The result of sin will be darkness and shame, but those who are wise will be exalted. All the places that are mentioned in verse three are public places that many people would see each day. Sin is normally done in secret, but wisdom is performed openly so that all can see (vs 1-3).

Wisdom is illustrated as a woman who cries out in these public places. Solomon then gave a list of what wisdom says. Wisdom desires the simple or naive person to get prudence. Prudence is a sensible approach to a person's life. It is being clever in a good sense. Those who are fools are encouraged to get wisdom. One of the greatest things about wisdom is that it is in everyone's reach. God has made some people far more intelligent than others, but that doesn't mean that they are closer to being wise than the person who has had little or no education. We can all be wise if we seek to know God and live out His principles in our daily lives (vs 4-5).

The words that we say will display how wise we are. Wisdom displays itself in noble words and says what is right (vs 6). A wise man will speak the truth and will not allow wickedness to come out of his mouth (vs 7). Wise words are words that are right before God and are not crooked or perverse. Wisdom doesn't make light of the evil that God hates (vs 8). Wisdom doesn't beat around the bush, but gives the truth in a way that can be accepted and understood (vs 9).

As Solomon has done already, he compared wisdom to silver, gold and precious jewels. Solomon had access to all the wealth in the world. He was one of the richest kings that ever lived. Yet, he knew that wisdom was far more important than any earthly possession that he could ever have (vs 10-11).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you known as a wise person? Are the words that come out of your mouth words of wisdom and righteousness? Are they words that lift up God and others, or are they words that tear down and speak of evil? You need to guard your tongue. Jesus told us that what comes out of our mouths is what is really in our hearts. You need to use your tongue to lift others up and to be an example of Jesus Christ. It is easy to become critical and use your mouth in a negative way. This is often a result of pride and thinking that you are better than you really are. This can lead you to talk about sin in a light manner, not viewing it as God views it. Determine today, that with God's help, everything you say will bring honor and glory to God.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for giving you a tongue to praise Him.*
- * *Ask God to help you become a wise person.*
- * *Praise God for being a righteous God.*

Thought for the day

What questions are asked in verse 1?

Why are these questions asked?

What four places is wisdom pictured as standing (vs 2-3)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What do these places indicate about wisdom?

Who was wisdom calling out to (vs 4)?

What should “simple ones” learn (vs 5)?

What should “fools” learn (vs 5)?

What will wisdom speak (vs 6-7)?

What does the end of verse seven mean?

Why can wisdom be trusted (vs 8)?

How is wisdom “straight” to those who seek after it (vs 9)?

****Wisdom is not hiding. It is in plain sight and can be understood.*

How do wisdom and knowledge work together (vs 9)?

What is wisdom more valuable than (vs 10)?

Why is this a powerful statement?

What can not compare to wisdom (vs 11)?

Memory Verses

Isaiah 40:1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. 3 A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God? 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. The LORD has spoken!" 6 A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. 9 Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" 10 Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd. He will carry the lambs in his arms, holding them close to his heart. He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young. 12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? 13 Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel? 14 Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? 15 Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust. 16 Lebanon would not suffice for fuel, nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering. 17 All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness. 18 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? 19 An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains.