God’s Way To Health, Wealth & Wisdom
Discover Solomon’s Dynamic Secrets For A Life Of Success

There’s an old proverb which says, "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." We have Benjamin Franklin to thank for this bit of wisdom – but the problem is that a lot of people who go to bed early and get up early are neither healthy, wealthy, nor wise!

It takes more than going to bed with the chickens and setting an early alarm to make you healthy, wealthy, and wise. What is taught in God's Word will make you all three – if you understand what true health, wealth, and wisdom are. That's why we are going to study the book of Proverbs.

Somebody has said that a proverb is a short sentence based on long experience. That is, it is a lot of wisdom distilled into a single sentence. Sometimes though, human proverbs can be confusing or even contradictory.

For example, "Look before you leap." But what about "He who hesitates is lost?" This is kind of disquieting, isn’t it? You don't know which one of those proverbs to heed. Or you might hear "You only get what you pay for." That sounds good until somebody else says, "The best things in life are free."

Here's another one: "Leave well enough alone." But then you remember that "Progress never stands still." There is truth in all of these proverbs if you see them rightly and understand what the person giving the proverb meant to say.

Human proverbs are crafted from experience, but the truths in the book of Proverbs are not necessarily learned from experience. They are God's words of wisdom, given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They show God's ways for His people to know true health, wealth, and wisdom.

Wisdom is the theme of the Book of Proverbs. As you read it, you may want to circle the word "wisdom" because God uses it so many times. For example, in Proverbs 1:1-7 you will find the words "wisdom" or "wise" occurring over and over again. Wisdom is the key, and if you continue to read, you will discover what wisdom is and how you can have it.

In this short booklet, we won't be able to cover every verse in Proverbs. Instead, what I will do is pick out some key verses to whet your appetite for this wonderful book.

THE INCOMPARABLE WORTH OF WISDOM

Proverbs 1:1-2 says: "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding." This is the basic theme and purpose of the book. Solomon then expands on this theme in 2:1-9:

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of His saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

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If God were to appear to you and ask, “What do you want Me to do for you? Ask for anything you want,” what would you ask? If you were hungry, you might ask for food. If you were sick, you might ask for health. If you were an egotist, you might ask for wealth and power.

Did you know that God once came to Solomon and asked him that very question? Let’s read the account in 2 Chronicles 1:7-10:

In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shown great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead. Now, O LORD God, let Thy promise unto David my father be established: for Thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this Thy people, that is so great?

Isn’t that tremendous? God’s king didn’t ask for health or wealth for himself, or power over his enemies. Nor did he ask for position, fame, or honor. Solomon asked for wisdom. I wonder if God had a smile on His face as He replied:

Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge My people, over whom I have made thee king: Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like. (2 Chronicles 2:11-12)

In other words, God gave Solomon wisdom like no king has ever had or ever will have because he had discernment enough to ask for wisdom. And with that wisdom, God also granted Solomon many other things that people dream and scheme for – even sell their souls for! Solomon asked for the best, and got these other things with it.

More than anything, I want my children to have wisdom. As a pastor, I desire wisdom to lead my people, and I want them to have the wisdom of God. There is nothing better you could ask for than wisdom because so many other things are included in it.

“For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it” (Proverbs 8:11). Now, that's a pretty big statement – everything that is to be desired is not to be compared with wisdom.

What is the incomparable worth of wisdom? Why is wisdom worth so much? First of all, I would say it is because the Father provides it. Second, because it is produced by the Holy Spirit, and thirdly, because it is exhibited in the presence of His Son Jesus.

THE PROVISION OF THE FATHER

First, wisdom is worth so much because the Father provides it. Notice Proverbs 1:1 again: “The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel.” In Proverbs 2:1a, Solomon says: “My son, if thou wilt receive my words.”

Here is a father speaking to his son. King Solomon has a son whom he loves just as I love my children and grandchildren. He wants his son to be successful and useful. He wants him to have fulfillment and integrity in life, so instead of saying, “Oh, my son here is something I have for you or something I have produced for you,” he directs his son to the heavenly Father – the provider of all wisdom.
But, this is much more than just a father and king speaking to his son. This is God speaking to us as His children. These are the inspired words of the heavenly King to His children. I guess I could have titled this booklet, "Wise Words for the King's Kids" because that is what they are.

It's important that we understand wisdom because it is the provision of the Father so that His children might be wise. God wants you to be wise. That's why it pleased God so much when Solomon asked for wisdom.

Paul knew the importance of asking God for His wisdom. In his letter to the Ephesians Paul asked God to give them His wisdom:

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

James said that if we needed wisdom, we should ask God, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).

Then, he describes God's wisdom, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

THE PRODUCT OF THE SPIRIT

Look again at Proverbs 2:1-2:

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding.

Receiving God's words and hiding His commandments implies that there is a teacher. Who is the teacher of wisdom? He is the Holy Spirit. We are to listen to our Teacher. Jesus said, "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (John 16:13).

The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Wisdom. The following prophecy about Jesus in Isaiah 11:1-3a says,

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of His roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD.

Did you know that you can get knowledge without the Holy Spirit, but you cannot get true wisdom without Him? What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? Knowledge is learned, while wisdom is given.

Knowledge comes by looking around; wisdom comes by looking up. Knowledge comes by studying; wisdom comes by meditation. Wisdom is the right application of knowledge.

There's nothing wrong with knowledge. Don't fail to study. Second Timothy 2:15 says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the
word of truth." Just remember that knowledge is just splendid ignorance apart from the wisdom God provides to apply that knowledge.

Wisdom is related to the word "skill" in the Old Testament. For example, the Bible says that God gave the spirit of wisdom to those who built the tabernacle so they could do the job. Some translations even say that God gave them the spirit of skill, or that God gave them skill to build the tabernacle (see Exodus 36).

So the words "wisdom" and "skill" are related. What does that mean to us? It means that wise living is living skillfully or living to the optimum. Wise living is extracting the most out of life. You become like an artist or practitioner – someone who lives life with skill.

We need to put our lives together this way. We need to learn to live skillfully, which is the product of the Holy Spirit. We know from the Bible that great men are not always wise. And there are some things you cannot learn from experience – true wisdom only comes from the Holy Spirit.

There was once a boy whose father owned a number of successful gold mines out West in the early days. He wanted his son to take over the business, so when his son was old enough the father sent him back East to a great university. The boy studied engineering, mining, and metallurgy; and after graduation came back to the gold mine and said, "I'm ready, father. Put me to work."

So the father said, "Well, son, I believe the best thing for you would be to put on some old clothes and go down into the mines. Work with your hands and gain the knowledge that comes by experience, the kind you can't get any other way."

But the son said, "Dad, I don't need to do that. I've been to school and learned things you have never even thought about. I have experiences I've learned, and I'm ready to go to work. If you will give me the best gold mine you have, I will show you how to really make it produce."

The father said all right, and gave his son a certain mine. The boy did well for a while, but eventually sent a wire to his father which read: "I need help. I've got a problem. The mine is backed up to a lake and the water is beginning to seep in. What do you suggest?" But the father didn't answer.

After a while the son wired his father again: "The situation is getting bad. We have shored it up, but the shoring is seeping and we're not able to stop the water from coming in. I need some advice." Again the father didn't answer.

So the boy wired a third time and said, "Father, the situation is desperate, the lake is coming in. We are about to lose the mine." The father wired back: "Shove your diploma in that hole."

There are some things you can learn in school, and there are some things you cannot learn in school! Wisdom is more than common sense. That son didn't even have common sense, but wisdom is a supernatural gift from God.

Wisdom is the provision of the Father and the product of the Holy Spirit. But wisdom is even more. You will never have real wisdom until you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior.

**The Presence Of The Son**

Proverbs 1:2 says that we are to "know wisdom," and in Proverbs 2:10 wisdom is to enter into our hearts. Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God, and no one has wisdom until Christ enters his heart.
In 1 Corinthians 1:20 Paul asks, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?” The scribe was the intellectual with the Ph.D. The disputer was the debater or philosopher.

Then, Paul asks, “Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” We would have to say Amen to that! We boast of our wisdom, and yet civilization is caving in on us.

Continue reading in 1 Corinthians 1:21: “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

I think this is one of the neatest things in the Bible. God is so wise that He won't let you learn about Him by mere human wisdom. I think of the great scientist, Albert Einstein, who died in 1955. Before he died he said,

I feel like a man chained. If I could only be free from the shackles of my intellectual smallness then I could understand the universe in which I live. My mind is not great enough. Oh, if I could just take the shackles off, if I could just probe into the mysteries of the universe.

For Einstein to have known the mysteries of the universe he would need to have known Christ, for the Bible says that all of the treasures of wisdom are hidden in Jesus (see Colossians 2:3).

Before we can know God we must lay our intellectual pride in the dust. Matthew 11:25 says, “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” Aren't you glad? I am not against intellectualism, but when you come to God you don't come head first, you come heart first!

If a person with a high IQ could know God better than somebody else, then God would not be fair. But everybody has a heart, and we can know God with all of our hearts no matter what the level of our IQ.

Paul continues in 1 Corinthians 1:22 by saying, “For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.” The Jews were looking for a mighty Messiah, and the Gentiles were looking for someone like Socrates. They had intellectualized God and begun to worship at the shrine of their intelligence.

But Paul answers,

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. (1 Corinthians 1:23-24)

Jesus is wisdom personified. Wisdom commences at conversion and deepens by discipleship. A man does not have even a modicum of wisdom until he knows the Lord.

God desires wisdom so much for you that He sent His dear Son to die upon Calvary's cross that you might know this wisdom. Then He sent His dear Holy Spirit to teach it to you. This is the incomparable worth of wisdom!

**THE INFAILIBLE WAY TO WISDOM**

In Proverbs 2, we learn three things about the infallible way to wisdom.

**THE PURSUIT OF THE SCRIPTURE**
First, if you are to have God's wisdom, you must pursue the Scriptures. It's all predicated on Proverbs 2:1-2:

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding.

If you won't receive God's Word, you will never know His wisdom. God's infallible and inerrant Word is His handbook of wisdom for His children.

You must pursue His Word, you must pray over His Word, you must study His Word, you must saturate yourself with His Word. Here are four excellent ways to pursue the wisdom of God.

**Appreciate God's Word.**

Proverbs 2:1 says we are to "receive [God's] words." The word "receive" literally means to "welcome" God's Word, just like you would gladly welcome an old friend into your home. Are you ready to welcome God's Word into your heart and obey it?

**Appropriate God's Word.**

Look again at the phrase "Hide my commandments with thee" in Proverbs 2:1. That means not only to let the Word in, but to let it seep deep inside you.

Psalm 119:11 says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." If we would possess wisdom, wisdom must first possess us. We must get into God's Word and hide it in our hearts.

**Assimilate God's Word.**

As we get into the Word and the Word gets into us, it becomes like a part of our body's tissue. That's what assimilation means – to take something into the body so it can absorb it into the tissues and be transformed into something our bodies can use.

Romans 12:2 says, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

**Activate God's Word.**

Proverbs 2:2 says we are to "apply [our] heart to understanding." When you apply the Word, it gets off the page and out of the notebook and into your head. Then it gets out of your head and into your heart and you begin to activate it. At that moment, it becomes wisdom to you! James 1 says,

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

Study of the Bible gives you knowledge about God. But obedience gives you knowledge of God – and there's a difference.
Jesus said, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23).

When you obey God's Word, then He begins to reveal Himself to you in wisdom. Be a person of the Book and you will be a person of wisdom.

**THE PRAYER OF THE SAINT**

Along with the pursuit of the Scriptures there must be a vibrant prayer life. Proverbs 2:3-5 says,

> Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

**We Are To Pray With Intensity.**

This is not a will-o-the wisp, "Now I lay me down to sleep" kind of prayer. With all of the function and unction and emotion of the mind, body, soul, and spirit, we say to God, "I want to know wisdom."

God does business with those who mean business. James 5:16b says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Do you really want to know the way of God? Do you cry out after wisdom? Do you seek it with all of your heart? Pray fervently for it. God forgive us for our cold, indifferent, half-hearted prayer life!

**We Are To Pray With Insistency.**

What if someone told you that a valuable treasure was hidden somewhere on your property? The former owner had put it there, and when you bought the house you also got the treasure. It's all yours if you can just find it. Would you look for it? Of course you would! We'd be foolish not to search for it.

It will be a great day when God's people seek wisdom like they seek wealth.

Some professional athletes get multi-million-dollar contracts. You may say, "I don't believe in paying ballplayers that kind of money." But let me say that most of us have not even begun to pursue wisdom the way those people pursue excellence on the athletic field.

There is something worth more than millions. It's wisdom. I tell you, those athletes put us to shame. They knock themselves out for a corruptible crown, yet we are supposed to be pursuing an incorruptible one! Paul said,

> Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. (1 Corinthians 9:24-25)

Proverbs 8:11 says, "For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." We are to search for wisdom as a man seeks and searches for hidden treasure. We are to pray with fervency, insistency, and with expectancy.

**We Are To Pray Expectantly.**
Proverbs 2:6 says, "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." This is a promise. When you study the Word and persistently and expectantly pray, I can tell you on the authority of the Word that God is going to grant you wisdom.

First John 5:14-17 says,

And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.

God is not going to scold you if you don't have wisdom and come to Him for it. He is pleased when you tell Him, "God, I need Your wisdom. Lord, I've got a tough decision to make and I need to know what You want me to do."

He will give it to you! God wants you to have wisdom. Annie Johnson Flint, a hymn writer said it this way in the hymn she wrote, "He Giveth More Grace."

His love has no limit,
His grace has no measure,
His power has no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again!

THE PRESENCE OF THE SAVIOR

Finally, in Proverbs 2:7-10 we read:

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.
He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of His saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path. When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.

The third thing that teaches us the infallible way to wisdom is the presence of the Savior. Who is our wisdom? It is the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Solomon speaks of "sound wisdom," the idea is "wholeness." In Christ there is soundness and wholeness. Solomon also speaks of a "buckler" or shield. In Christ there is strength.

In verse 8, he speaks of preserving God's saints. In Christ there is security. In verse 9 he speaks of "every good path" and in verse 10 he speaks of "pleasantness." In Christ there is satisfaction.

In Christ there is soundness, strength, security, and satisfaction. Do you want wisdom? You must pursue the Scriptures. You must pray fervently for wisdom.

But all of these are no good unless you have the presence of the Savior. It is Christ who is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. First Corinthians 1:26-31 says,

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That
no flesh should glory in his presence. **But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:** That, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (emphasis mine)

Oh, to know Jesus, the wisdom of God and the power of God!

**A CLOSING PLEA**

Admit Your Sin
First, you must admit that you are a sinner. The Bible says, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
It is our sin that separates us from God and from fulfilling our deepest needs and longings. Sin is an offense against God that carries a serious penalty. According to Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death [eternal separation from the love and mercy of God]."

Abandon Your Efforts
Second, you must abandon any efforts to save yourself. If we could save ourselves, Jesus' death would have been unnecessary!
Even "getting religion" cannot get you to heaven. The Bible says it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His [God's] mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:5). Salvation is by God's grace, "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Acknowledge Christ's Payment
What you cannot do for yourself, Jesus Christ has done for you! "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). He died on the cross for you and then rose from the dead to prove that His payment was acceptable to God. But you must acknowledge and believe this fact. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Accept Christ as Your Savior
Salvation is God's gift to you. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). When someone offers you a priceless gift, the wisest thing you can do is accept it! This very moment, you can receive Christ's gift of salvation by sincerely praying this simple prayer from your heart:

Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I know that You love me and want to save me. Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God, who died on the cross to pay for my sins. I believe God raised You from the dead. I now turn from my sin and, by faith, receive You as my personal Lord and Savior. Come into my heart, forgive my sins, and save me, Lord Jesus. In Your name I pray, Amen.

Friend, if you have not yet made a decision for Christ, I urge you to receive Him today. You'll be eternally glad to know the love worth finding!