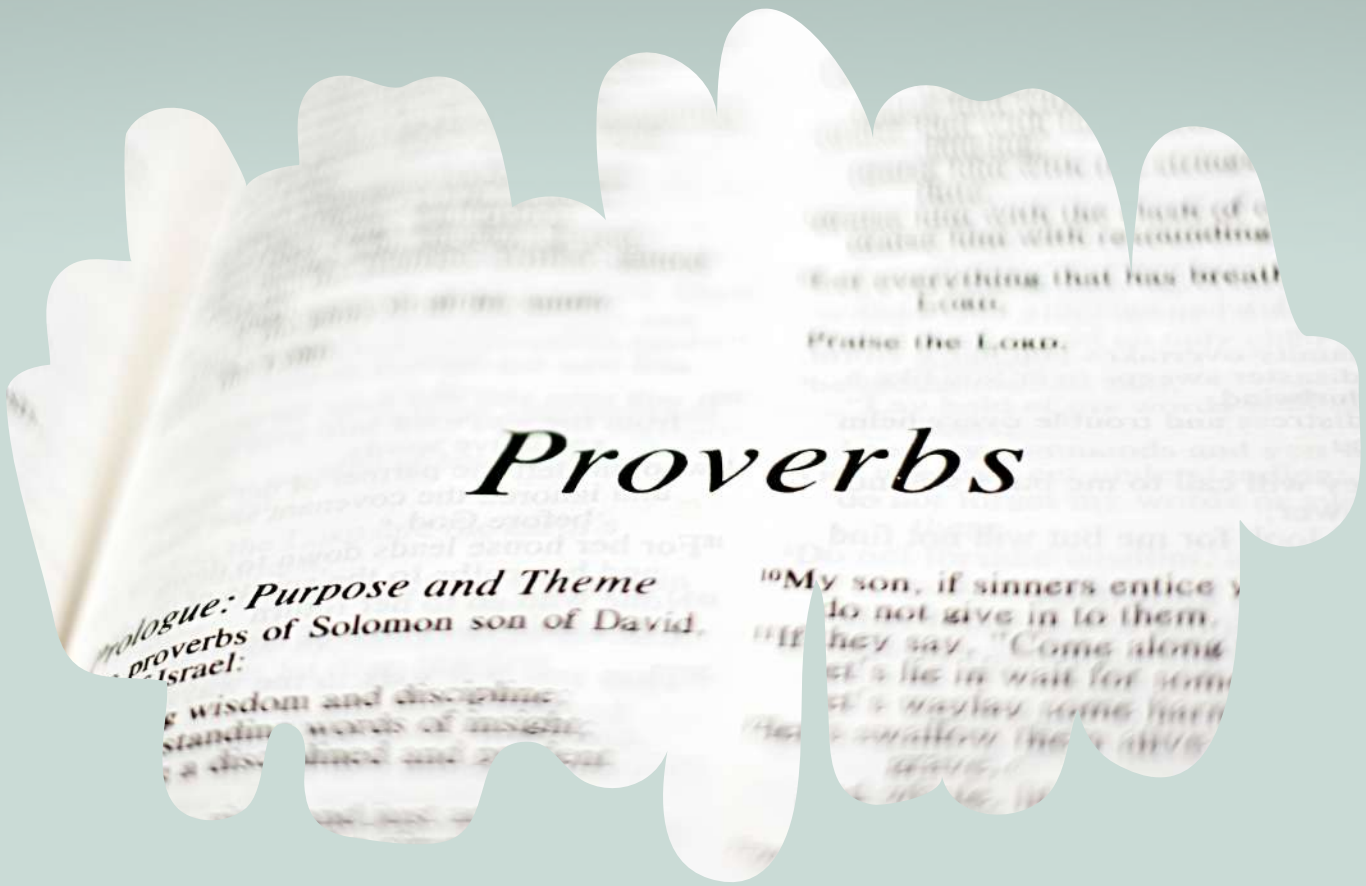
Proverbs:

Wisdom For Today

Devotional Journal

Volume 1



WISDOM FOR TODAY

Devotional Journal

Volume 1

USING THE WRITING THROUGH PROVERBS: WISDOM FOR TODAY DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

Pray first and allow the Holy Spirit to guide each day in the Word.

Devotional Entries

Each section of scripture includes a devotional entry based on the scriptures for that day. You can choose to engage with the devotional entry or not.

Read/Write Out the Passage

Read the scripture in context. Consider reading the passage in multiple translations. Write out the passage in your handwriting. This will help you hide the Word in your heart. Each Scripture writing page is lined to make writing easier.

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Key Words

Highlight keywords. Use resources to find the meaning of the words. Try finding the meaning in the original language.

Notes/Key Principles

Capture notes and identify the key principles from the verse. Consider reading commentary from your Bible or other reference books.

Related Scriptures

Use resources to identify any related scriptures (cross-references). Read those scriptures in context.

Proverbs

Genre: Poetry, wisdom literature
Hebrew poetry includes many different types of structure, but the most common structure in Proverbs is couplets, two ideas (one after the other). One idea contrasts, completes, corresponds with, or forms a comparison with the other. Some examples are 13:1, 16:3, and 25:24.

Author: Solomon, the third king of Israel (King David's son), authored most of Proverbs. Proverbs 25-29 are proverbs of King Solomon that were later copied by King Hezekiah's (king of Judah) scribes for posterity (see Proverbs 25:1). Proverbs 30 is credited to Agur and Proverbs 31 is credited to King Lemuel. Only a little is known about Agur and King Lemuel, but some scholars say Lemuel is just another name for Solomon.

Audience: Proverbs 1:8 indicates that Solomon was writing to his son. Proverbs 30:1 tells us that Agur's words were a message to Ithiel and Ucal. Nothing else is revealed about these people.

Themes: The theme of Proverbs is stated in the first few verses (1:1-7). The collection of wisdom was written for gaining wisdom and instruction. Wisdom starts with God; "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (1:7).

Time of Writing: Since Solomon authored most of Proverbs, it had to be completed before his death in 931 BC. King Hezekiah's scribes had to complete their work before the end of his reign in 686 BC. It is difficult to date the other writings.

Interesting Facts:

- Proverbs 31 is an acrostic poem. The first letter of each follows the complete Hebrew alphabet.
- Proverbs 22:17-24:34 contains the "30 Sayings of the Wise". The style and phrases are much like ancient Egyptian works. Many scholars believe Solomon adapted these saying and included them amongst

Proverbs Reading Tracker

Shade in a book as you read each chapter

Proverbs 1
Proverbs 2
Proverbs 3
Proverbs 4
Proverbs 5
Proverbs 6
Proverbs 7
Proverbs 8
Proverbs 9
Proverbs 10
Proverbs 11
Proverbs 12

Proverbs 13
Proverbs 14
Proverbs 15
Proverbs 16
Proverbs 17
Proverbs 18
Proverbs 19
Proverbs 20
Proverbs 21
Proverbs 22
Proverbs 23
Proverbs 24

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

Proverbs 25
Proverbs 26
Proverbs 27
Proverbs 28
Proverbs 29
Proverbs 30
Proverbs 31

DAY 1
Read Proverbs 1

Hear and Increase

TODAY'S FOCUS

A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel, to understand a proverb and an enigma, the words of the wise and their riddles. Proverbs The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:5-7

No one can exist alone. No one becomes wiser alone. Even the wise know they only increase in wisdom when they are willing and open to listening to the wisdom of others. Solomon expresses the necessity of attending to wise counsel.

All knowledge starts with God. The pathway to wisdom is to revere Him and stand in awe of His glory. Solomon will return to this point later in Proverbs, highlighting its importance. Here, however, he quickly contrasts the wise and fools.

The wise fear God. They humbly worship Him, understanding their need for God and their despair without Him. In contrast, fools despise wisdom and instruction. Psalm 14:1a says, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" They choose not to move towards wisdom but rather to remain unteachable. With hardened hearts, they reject God in favor of worldly pursuits that can never lead to true wisdom.

If we are to increase and grow, we must give an ear to the wise. Refrain from thinking you're above the sound advice of others. It all begins with God. As you grow in the fear and admonition of God, you will also increase in knowledge.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 2
Read Proverbs 2

Pursue Wisdom

TODAY'S FOCUS

Incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:2-6

Solomon admonished his son to get wisdom. Not passively, but to make a passionate pursuit for it. We are to treat wisdom like a treasured possession, like precious silver. When we pursue wisdom, our search will lead us to a passionate pursuit of God. True wisdom only comes from Him. He gives wisdom to all those who seek it. Those who pursue the treasures of knowledge find it from the very mouth of God.

James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." The pursuit of wisdom is beautiful. It is like a child who eagerly awaits a word from his father. Chase after the heart of God and seek His face, and you will not be disappointed. Ask God for the wisdom you desire. He generously gives you all you need for this journey. He invites you to ask and will never disappoint or scold you for asking.

We must put forth diligent effort to gain and skillfully apply God's wisdom. Incline your ear--receive the Word of the Lord when it is spoken and taught or in your own devotional time. Apply your heart to understanding--avail yourself to study to know what God's Word means. Cry out for discernment-ask the Holy Spirit to sharpen your insight so you can skillfully apply the wisdom that comes from the mouth of God. It is for you, and it will enhance your life.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 3
Read Proverbs 3

Trust God

TODAY'S FOCUS

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6

It is easy to rely on what you know. Background knowledge is key to embracing new learning. The brain works to build upon what you already know. There is a danger, however, in leaning on what you know and the understanding you have constructed through worldly systems of knowledge.

Solomon warns, in the 7th verse, "Do not be wise in your own eyes." Trusting your background knowledge and leaning on what you know is easy. This is especially true when that knowledge and understanding are based on your own experiences. But even your experiences cannot be trusted to guide your path.

Instead, confidently trust God. To trust Him wholeheartedly is to desire His will for your life. This means you must forsake your own understanding. To do so, we must acknowledge God in all that we do. Put Him first. Seek Him diligently. Make an intentional effort to invite Him into every part of your life. This includes your decision-making, your parenting, your meal planning-in every way, invite Him in!

Completely trust the Lord with your whole life! In every way, acknowledge Him. When we invite Him into every area of life, He responds by directing our paths. He will make our paths straight, leading us to what is right and pleasing in His sight.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 4
Read Proverbs 4

Keep Your Heart

TODAY'S FOCUS

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. Proverbs 4:23

Being overprotective can be seen as a negative quality. It can, however, be very endearing; imagine an overprotective parent who carefully watches over EVERYTHING their child does. They are careful to guard them against any potential danger. We should take that same care when it comes to our hearts.

"Keep," in its most accurate translation, means to watch, observe, or guard with fidelity. Like a vigilant parent, we must watch over our hearts (our minds, will, and the seat of emotions). We need to guard it with fidelity, not letting in negative thoughts that would cause us to fear, fret, or have anxiety. We defend our minds against the evils of this world and everything that is against God.

Solomon gives reason for the necessity of diligently guarding our minds-" for out of it flows the issues of life." Jesus said it this way, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaks." Luke 6:45. Whatever you allow to fill your heart will flow from your mouth (also see Matthew 12:34).

There is a battle for our hearts and minds. Learn to rid your mind of what doesn't belong (2 Corinthians 10:5) and be intentional about what should be there (Philippians 4:8). Be diligent, attentive, and always on guard. Your mouth will speak from the overflow of your heart. What you say reveals the content of your heart.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 5
Read Proverbs 5

Flee Temptation

TODAY'S FOCUS

For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He ponders all his paths. His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and he is caught in the cords of his sin. He shall die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray. Proverb 5:21-23

Proverbs 5 speaks of the dangers of temptation. Even though he talks specifically about adultery, Solomon's advice is beneficial for dealing with all types of temptations.

Don't think that you can play with temptation! Temptation will come, but we do not have to fall to it. Don't entertain what tempts you. Don't linger around it. Instead, flee! Know that God will help you. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

Temptation will come, but God will not allow you to be tempted past the point you can bear. He will always provide a way of escape, so you do not have to succumb to temptation. Look for the ways that God has made, and quickly walk in them.

Don't be so arrogant to think that you are getting away with things that do not please God. He knows the paths you choose to take, and He sees every step you make. There are blessings for those who endure temptation (a crown of life, see James 1:12). Conversely, if you yield to temptation, spiritual deadness looms (see James 1:14-15).

With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can resist temptation and live a life that is pleasing to God. He can "keep you from falling" if you trust Him.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 6
Read Proverbs 6

Plan and Prepare

TODAY'S FOCUS

Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest. Proverbs 6:6-

It is not strange to see a show or movie with a character depicted as being lazy. Sometimes these characters are, in humor, seen to be admired for their indolence. Laziness, however, is seen as a characteristic of the unrighteous. It is not to be celebrated or glamorized. Instead, we should aim to be industrious, hardworking, and resilient.

In his admonishment, Solomon says we should look at the ant for inspiration. The ant is a hard worker! Having no one to rule over them or tell them what should be done, ants innately gather food in the summer to prepare for the cold winter months. Solomon says we should consider the ways of the ant and be wise. In other words, act accordingly.

In 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12, Apostle Paul tells those in the Thessalonian church that if anyone refuses to work, they should not eat! The idea is that those who are able to work but choose laziness should not sit idly by and benefit from what others are doing. Missing a few meals due to inactivity would help them learn the value of hard work!

Solomon warns that the danger of laziness is poverty. Just as winter comes for the ant, hard and lean times come. Proper preparation helps to endure those times (vs. 11). We should also work hard so that we will have something to share with others in need (those who cannot work for themselves) (see Ephesians 4:28). Make God a part of your decision-making process. He will lead you to the best plans and help you prepare properly.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 7
Read Proverbs 7

Don't Forget

TODAY'S FOCUS

Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your nearest kin. Proverbs 7:2-4

Again Solomon warns against falling to temptation, especially to sexual temptation. He pleads with his son to hold on to what he taught him. They should be written on his heart so that he can avoid falling to temptations. Solomon admonished his son to treat wisdom as a treasure. Keep wise words near to his heart and mind.

This is how we should treat God's wisdom in our lives. We should cherish it and protect it. Solomon continues to personify wisdom, saying that 'she' should be treated as a sister and understanding as a close relative.

To "bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart" is to be deliberate about remembering. We have already seen in Proverbs the need to remember the father's teachings (the son was told to wear them around his neck and write them on the tablets of his heart, Proverb 3:3).

There is a benefit to remembering and heeding the father's teachings. In chapter seven, protecting the instructions helps the son resist temptation (That they may keep you from the immoral woman, vs. 5). In Proverbs 3, when deliberate action is taken to remember, the son would "find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man."

We should be deliberate and intentional about our Father's teaching and commands. His Words to us are life and life-giving. When we treasure and store God's Word in our hearts, it helps us resist temptations (Psalm 119:11). When we meditate on the Word of God and carefully obey what He has said, we "will be prosperous and successful." (Joshua 1:8).

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 8
Read Proverbs 8

Wisdom's Call

TODAY'S FOCUS

Does not wisdom cry out, and understanding lift up her voice? She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, beside the way, where the paths meet. She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, at the entrance of the doors: "To you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men. Proverbs 8:1-4

Have you ever stopped up your ears to avoid hearing what someone was saying? Maybe you've seen an ornery child do this when they don't like what's being said. This is the posture of those who refuse wisdom. They try to ignore wisdom with the excuse of being unaware. That cannot ever be possible because wisdom cries out!

Again, Solomon personifies wisdom as a woman calling out to all humanity. She cries out from the high hilltops. She cries out at the crossroads where everyone can hear her. At the city gates, at places of business commerce, she calls faithfully, lifting her voice so that no one is excused from hearing her message. Her message is for everyone. But would everyone receive it?

Though wisdom's message has been freely given, there are those who, like ornery children, stop their ears to the truth. God's truth has been preached and taught down through the ages. It has been heralded in every possible place. Even if someone could say they have not heard, God has revealed Himself through creation. All creation testifies of His glory, so every person is without excuse (Romans 1:19-20).

The truth is the world's wisdom is opposed to God's wisdom. We receive God's wisdom through Jesus Christ. He is wisdom for us (1 Corinthians 1:30). So, open your ears, and hear wisdom's call.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 9
Read Proverbs 9

Wisdom's Invitation

TODAY'S FOCUS

"Whoever Is simple, let him turn in here!"As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him, "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Forsake foolishness and live, and go in the way of understanding. Proverbs 9:4-6

Have you ever been invited to two events on the same day at the same time? It can be difficult to decide which event to attend. When deciding which one to attend, you may consider the host, the menu, the number of guests, and many other factors. You would ultimately choose the one that provides you the greatest benefit.

In Proverbs 9, wisdom (personified again) builds a house and prepares a party. Then she sends out servants and calls from the city's highest point, inviting all to come. The simple are invited to come feast on wisdom. As a result, they will walk away with knowledge and understanding. When you encounter God's wisdom, your life will change-you will never be the same.

Later in the same chapter, we see another invitation from another lady. This time her name is folly, but you may know her by another name--foolishness. She also invites guests to come, but partying with folly leads to death. Verse 18 tells us that those who accept folly's invitation "are in the depths of hell."

Two invitations. One invitation is to receive wisdom, to walk away from foolishness and live. The other invitation is to continue in folly, living according to the lusts of your flesh, which can only lead to death. It is a foolish and dangerous thing to reject wisdom's invitation. As Proverbs 13:20 says, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed."

Scripture

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Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 10
Read Proverbs 10

Watch Your Words

TODAY'S FOCUS

In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise. Proverbs 10:19

We all know someone who talks too much. It may even be you! The more a person talks, the greater the possibility of saying the wrong thing. And not just the wrong thing, but the sinful thing.

Many verses in Proverbs 10 deal with the mouth and words of both the wise and that of fools:

- The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked (vs. 11)
- Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding (vs. 13)
- the mouth of the foolish is near destruction (vs. 14)
- Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool (vs. 18)
- The tongue of the righteous is choice silver (vs. 20)
- The lips of the righteous feed many (vs. 21)
- The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but the perverse tongue will be cut out (vs. 31)
- The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked know what is perverse (vs. 32)

Our words shape our character. A foolish person is known for their many words (Ecc. 5:3). In contrast, the wise person is known as one who can restrain their mouth. James chapter 3 talks about the tongue. It is a small part of the body but can do much damage. James wrote: "If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect [mature] man, able also to bridle the whole body" (James 3:2b). We cannot restrain our mouths on our own. We need the help of the Holy Spirit. Yield to His leading and convictions. He will help us watch our mouths!

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 11

Read Proverbs 11

Keep Watching

TODAY'S FOCUS

A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter. Proverbs 11:13

Just as we all know someone who talks too much, most of us know a talebearer, a gossiper, one who maliciously reveals secrets. Someone who knows something and just cannot keep it to themselves but feels the prideful need to reveal what they know to others.

Chapter eleven of Proverbs is filled with couplets of advice that contrast righteousness and wickedness. Among the wise advice Solomon gives, he warns about talebearers. In the original language of scripture, the term talebearer is a gossiper, a slanderer. This is one who can't be trusted to keep what is shared, therefore, cannot be trusted at all.

Keeping secrets is not always a positive thing, but this verse does not speak to hiding the truth or concealing important matters that may cause harm to someone. This verse is about gossiping and betraying confidences.

It can seem fun and harmless to share a little gossip or 'spill the tea,' but it is rarely harmless, and it is not so fun if the subject of the gossip is you. Proverbs 20:19 says, "He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips." Stay away from gossip sessions. Foster healthy fellowships by refusing to be a part of slanderous conversations. Be a trustworthy friend who protects the character of others.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 12

Read Proverbs 12

Heed Counsel

TODAY'S FOCUS

The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel *is* wise.
Proverbs 12:15

Listening is essential; not just hearing, but truly listening to what is being said, taking it in, and considering what you will do with what you heard. A wise person seeks the counsel of others, but a foolish person thinks they know what is right.

Our prideful, sinful nature wants us to believe we don't need advice or help of any kind. We want to think that we can solve all our problems our way. The enemy of our souls would like us to trust our own ideas and methods and take our own course of action. We have to go against our flesh and listen! Seek out wisdom!

Be careful not to heed the advice of the ungodly. Psalm 1:1 warns against walking in the counsel of the ungodly. Anyone who rejects God's wisdom cannot give you sound advice. If they are spiritually dead, they cannot speak life to you.

If you cannot find wise counsel in the people you surround yourself with, trust in and rely on the Holy Spirit. He will lead you in the way of life.

Proverbs 3:7 cautions us, "do not be wise in your own eyes." Don't think you can determine right and wrong on your own. Don't depend on your own wisdom. You cannot trust your own ways, you cannot trust your own heart, you cannot trust yourself. Instead, pray! Ask God to lead you to the right people to help you. And listen.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 13

Read Proverbs 13

Heed Correction

TODAY'S FOCUS

Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains correction, but he who regards a rebuke will be honored. Proverbs 13:18

Everybody needs to be corrected at some point. It never feels good, but it is good for you. Somehow, the word rebuke has taken on negative connotations, maybe because some don't couple it with love. Rebuke (when done right) should be graciously received and regarded. Obedient children receive and apply correction, but those who disdain correction will face dishonor.

In one way, it is dishonoring to a parent or leader when correction is given and not heeded. To scoff at leaders when they are offering correction is disgraceful. In other words, those who do not receive correction bring disgrace upon themselves when they continue their wrong behavior. When you have godly leaders, friends who mean well, or parents who want the best for you, it is always better to listen than to go your own way.

This is even more true when it comes to the Lord's correction. Proverbs 3:11-12 says, "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor detest His correction; for whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights." We shouldn't despise or detest His correction because it comes in love. The most loving Father wants what's best for us. He will not allow us to go down the wrong paths without correcting us and guiding us back to the right way. He does this most often through His Word.

Heed correction, especially the sweet chastening of the Lord. In His love, He brings honor to our lives when we obey.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 14

Read Proverbs 14

Slow to Anger

TODAY'S FOCUS

He that is slow to anger is of great understanding; But he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly. Proverbs 14:29

Anger issues can wreak havoc on relationships. Having knee-jerk reactions and quick-tempered responses can lead to unnecessary hostilities and strife. Letting your emotions get out of control and fly off the handle is easy, but it is not like God.

Exodus 34:6 says, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness." He is long-suffering and patient. His anger is always righteous in response to evil, sin, and injustice in the world. Even still, in His mercy, He gives man opportunities to repent. Over and over, He gives us second chances.

We, however, are not God! Controlling anger is not a problem for Him; it is for us. James 1:19-20 says, "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God." Here, James gives us practical advice. James appealed to the saints to be quick and ready to hear but slow to speak and slow to become angry. Such advice is essential to keeping the enemy at bay as he attempts to steal your peace and wreck your relationships. It is so easy to go off on a wild tangent before you really hear another person out. This results in increased tension, hostility, and aggression.

It is important to stop before reacting too quickly. Our reactions should be measured and unhurried. Then we will have great understanding. Don't speak yet! Don't become angry yet! But first, hear. You cannot adequately speak to a matter you have yet heard fully. It is unwise to respond angrily before knowing what you are angry about. That is just plain foolish. How can I stop myself? Invite the Holy Spirit to help you. He will give you that gentle nudge in the right direction and tell you how to respond in a way that produces peaceable fruits of righteousness.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 15
Read Proverbs 15

Level Up

TODAY'S FOCUS

The way of life *winds* upward for the wise, that he may turn away from hell below. Proverbs 15:24

Level up is a term that has its source in video games. It has come to mean "to advance or improve" in life or to take your life to the next level. When a person has improved or grown in some way, you could say that they have "leveled up." When a person no longer struggles with something they once found difficult to overcome, you could say they have "leveled up."

The life of the wise levels up! Those who are wise will make choices with positive consequences and outcomes. They take actionable steps to improve their lives. They plan, execute, reflect, regroup, and restart as much as necessary. They know that many things in life result from our choices. Therefore, the wise make wise choices.

Among these choices is the wisest of all–the choice to trust Jesus as Savior. Those who trust in Christ and walk in wisdom will experience a better life. This does not mean that you will not experience trials, disappointments, or heartbreak, but it does mean that you will never face those things alone. Believers look at situations differently–we view life in the light of eternity. We should not become fixated on temporal things. We set our minds and our gaze on eternal things, not things that will soon pass away (Colossians 3:2). This way, our hearts and minds are lifted above our circumstances, so even when we face difficulty, we always level up!

The unwise make poor choices that lead to death. The wise turn away from death by turning to Jesus. He leads us in paths of righteousness and in the way everlasting (Psalm 23:3,139:240). What a way to level up!

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 16

Read Proverbs 16

Humbled Anyway

TODAY'S FOCUS

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18

Resisting pride and humility is a theme that runs throughout the Book of Proverbs and the whole Bible. Many passages of scripture admonish us to be humble.

In this humility, before God and others, God can be glorified. When we humble ourselves before the Lord, we are telling Him that we recognize that our help comes from Him and that we can do nothing without Him. We should choose the way of humility if we are going to glorify God in this life.

Sadly, some will not choose humility. Pride is a natural inclination for some. We want to take credit for what God has done. We want to believe that we are responsible for our success and status. We want to think that we know better than God how our lives should go. We may never verbalize this, but pride says that we don't need or want help from God.
Even though pride is natural to our flesh, we CAN walk in humility. Invite the Holy Spirit to help you, because it is imperative to choose humility, or you will be humbled anyway.

Jesus also warns about the necessity for humility. He said, "whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Matthew 23:12). If you humble yourself, God, Himself, will exalt you. God will place you where He wants you to be. And wherever He places you, He can keep you! But when you pridefully exalt yourself, get ready for a fall! This Proverb is not only wisdom, but it is a warning. Pride comes before destruction.

The more you go your own way, the more you reject God's way. The more you depend on yourself, the more likely you will be susceptible to failure. The more you exalt yourself, the more you will be painfully humbled, because pride comes before the fall. Choose the way of humility. Even if you don't, you will be humbled anyway.

Scripture

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 17

Read Proverbs 17

Heart and Health

TODAY'S FOCUS

A merry heart does good, *like* medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.
Proverbs 17:22

"Your attitude affects your altitude" is a common expression used to motivate and inspire people to keep a positive attitude in every circumstance. Solomon gives prudent spiritual advice that affects the mind, soul, and body. A merry, joyful heart can produce physical benefits!

But how do we maintain a merry heart in a world full of misery? James admonished believers to "count it all joy" when trouble comes. You don't have joy because of the trouble but despite them. If you patiently endure, your faith will develop, and you will be equipped to run well (James 1:2).
Everyone faces troubles, but not everyone endures in the same way. Some allow problems to break their spirit and dry up their bones. Some things affect us very deeply, and grief sets in. There is a place for grief and mourning, but we are not supposed to stay there. Confess those hurts to God and allow Him to redeem every broken place.

True joy only comes through knowing Jesus. He gives us His joy, that is unspeakable and full of glory (John 15:11, 1 Peter 1:8). We can have a merry heart by getting in and staying in the presence of the Lord, for in His presence is a fullness of joy (Psalm 16:11).

A merry heart is like a soothing balm to an aching soul. When we lean into the presence of Jesus, our hearts will be merry because we will know that He is our and we are His.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 18

Read Proverbs 18

Safety in the Name of the Lord

TODAY'S FOCUS

The Name of the Lord *is* a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.The rich man's wealth *is his* strong city, and like a high wall in his own esteem.
Proverb 18:10-11

The phrase "Name of the Lord" speaks to the Lord's character and attributes. It means to call upon the whole of God's character! To call on His name is to invoke all of His mighty attributes in your situation.

He is loving! He is mighty! He is wise! He is merciful! He is strong! He is unchallenged! He is always victorious!

Solomon likened calling on the Name of the Lord to a person in trouble or danger running to a fortified tower. There, they can be safe from all the things that attempt to steal their peace. When we call on the Name of the Lord, we run to Him, who is able to keep us in any and every situation. We are safe in His presence! There is no other safe place like the presence of the Lord!

When we pursue righteousness, we can confidently run to God for safety and protection. When we call on the Name of the Lord, we find refuge in His presence and joy in His great love. We can confidently come to Him, be loved, accepted, and get what we need.

Some would rather trust in their own riches. They believe their fortunes make them invincible, within a wall of protection. These people deceive themselves. Riches are fleeting. They can be here one day and gone the next. If you put your trust in anything other than the divine protection of God, you will be disappointed.

Scripture

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 19
Read Proverbs 19

Is Anybody Listening?

TODAY'S FOCUS

Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days. Proverbs 19:20

It is typical to hear a young son or daughter return to their parents and say, "I wish I had listened." Sadly, it is after a poor decision that such clarity comes.

Solomon's advice is to listen and give attention to what is being said. It is more than the sound going into the ear canal. It's about giving consideration to the words that are spoken. Don't just let the words pass through your ears, but turn them over and over in your mind, considering what value they add to your life.

Hearing is necessary, but there is greater importance in receiving what you've heard. To receive instruction means to accept it and act on it. Not acting on the wise instruction you've received is like owning something of great value but not putting it to use. It's like walking many miles to your destinations even though you have a working vehicle.

The more you listen to, receive, and act on the sound instruction you receive, you will gain wisdom in your future. When you encounter people who walk in wisdom, it is proof that they have taken the time to heed sound instruction. Conversely, those who act foolishly are those who won't hear, won't receive, and won't apply. Instead of maturing in wisdom, they continue in their foolish ways.

Remain teachable! Agree with sound instructions and act on it. You'll enjoy more wisdom as you mature, and you will be able to pass that wisdom on to others.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 20
Read Proverbs 20

Don't Repay Evil With Evil

TODAY'S FOCUS

Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the Lord, and He will deliver you. Proverbs 20:22

When you've been wronged, it is natural to want to get back at the person who did the wrong. In our sinful nature, revenge seems right; it seems like justice is being served. Solomon advises us, however, not to say I will repay evil," but to let the Lord handle it.

1 Peter 3:9 tells us not to "return evil for evil" but to bless those who have done you wrong. That is what we are called to do, bless and not curse. Pray for the well-being of those who wrong you. Then you will be blessed. We are called to bless and not curse.

God does not want us to take revenge into our own hands. We already know that we do not have the capacity to handle anger righteously. Our anger will never produce the righteousness of God. (James 1:20). When we try to take revenge, we mess it all up! In our humanity, things can spiral out of control!

Instead, let God handle it! Romans 12:19 says, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." God will give you the justice you deserve. He wants us to trust in His sovereignty and know that, in His timing, He will right all wrongs.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 21

Read Proverbs 21

Dressed and Ready to Stand Still

TODAY'S FOCUS

The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but deliverance is of the Lord. Proverbs 21:31

Alexander Graham Bell once said, "Before anything else, preparation is the key to success." Though this statement has great value, Solomon knew to Who to attribute his success.

Though the nation of Israel experienced peace during his reign, Solomon knew the necessity of preparing for battle, no doubt, from his father David, who was a mighty warrior. Readying the chariots, horses, arsenal, and other wartime equipment was no doubt familiar to him. However, Solomon knew that preparation was good but didn't guarantee victory. Only God can secure us a rousing victory.

Victory belongs to the Lord, and it is He who determines our success. We should not trust anything or anyone other than God to save us. He alone, in His sovereignty, holds the power to determine every outcome. And we can trust that He wants only the best for us. He proved that by sending His Son!

To trust anything or anyone else is to create false hope. David wrote, "The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue." A war horse, though strong, cannot save. The best preparations, no matter how complete, cannot deliver. Money, though effective in many realms, cannot rescue. Your intellect, no matter how acute, cannot redeem. Not your wit, talent, or network-nothing can secure your victory but the Lord!

So, go on and prepare, but please know and understand if you are to experience any victory, it is because of the mighty strong arm of your loving Father. We can declare, like David, "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God." Psalm 20:7

Scripture

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 22

Read Proverbs 22

The Company You Keep

TODAY'S FOCUS

Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul. Proverbs 22:24-25

"It rubbed off on me" is an excuse that some use when they exhibit behaviors not ordinarily characteristic of themselves but of those they keep company with. Some go as far as to say, "I don't know where that came from!" Proverbs 22:24-25 gives some hints.

Having friendships and close associations with angry people will affect you. Their sharp, harsh, and often hostile attitudes can be infectious in the worst way. If you align your life with such people, you will begin to hear the same sharp, harsh negativity coming from your own lips! You must guard your heart against ungodly influences.

The company you keep can cause you harm in many ways. When you adapt and entangle yourself in the ways of an irate person, you will set a trap for yourself! You run the risk of walking into situations that can wreck your relationships, hinder your spiritual growth, and potentially endanger your life!

Though the angry and hot-tempered are the focus here, the warning rings true for any ungodly, immoral, or just plain unfruitful associations. Paul warned those in the church at Corinth, "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals'" (1 Corinthians 15:33). Consider the company you keep! They can be a blessing in your life, or they may set a snare for your soul!

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 23

Read Proverbs 23

Change Your Focus!

TODAY'S FOCUS

Do not let your heart envy sinners, but be zealous for the fear of the Lord all the day; For surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off. Proverbs 23:17-18

The envy of sinners is something many believers deal with. It can be as small as being resentful of co-workers who break all the rules and still get praised; or as big as being envious of someone who prospers through dishonest means. It is all too common for believers to look at the lives of sinners and find themselves feeling jealous.

Asaph knew this well. In Psalm 73, he explained, "my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked (vv. 2,3). The first 16 verses focus on his struggle with envy, but verse 17 indicates a change. What changed? He entered the presence of God, then he understood the destiny of the wicked. The wages of sin is death, and the end result of wickedness is always destruction.

Like Asaph, we need to change our focus! Stop focusing on the sinner. Stop fixating on the things they do. Stop gazing at their popularity, wealth, or status. Don't give attention to their success because it is fleeting. Instead, live in reverent awe of the Lord. Zealously revere the Lord and focus on eternity.

2 Corinthians 4:18 says, "we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." When we set our hope on eternity, we know that the success of the wicked is only temporary, but we have a greater hope of life everlasting with our Savior. That hope cannot be taken away!

SCRIPTURE

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Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 24

Read Proverbs 24

It Gets Hard, But Don't Faint

TODAY'S FOCUS

If You faint in the day of adversity, your strength *is small*. Proverbs 24:10

It seems that some are always quitting. When times get hard, they give up. When things don't go their way, they throw in the towel. When they are offended, they are done! Another generation would say they must "develop some tough skin."

This frank but necessary caution tells of the condition of our spiritual walk. Our strength is not revealed in the good times, but it is fully known when we are facing trouble. How we respond tells us where we really stand in our faith. If you always fall, if you always quit, if you always give up when it gets hard, maybe you were not as strong as you thought you were.

Paul encouraged young pastor Timothy to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus " and to "endure hardship as a good soldier" (2 Timothy 2:3). He encouraged Timothy not to fold when things get hard but to endure. There is a blessing in endurance. James says that we should "consider it pure joy" when facing adverse situations because when we patiently endure those trials, we grow in our faith. We will be mature and complete in the faith, lacking nothing (James 1:2-3).

Growing in faith is not the only benefit of enduring trials. When we patiently endure, we emerge from those adverse situations with a testimony and experience that can help someone else. We are called to be helpers to one another. Therefore, we cannot faint, we cannot fold, and we cannot quit in hard times. We must learn to endure.

Trouble will come. When it does, strengthen your resolve and stand firm in the faith. Don't lose heart; God loves to rescue His children.

Scripture

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 25

Read Proverbs 25

The Right Words at the Right Time

TODAY'S FOCUS

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. Proverbs 25:11

Words have tremendous power. They can uplift and lighten, or they can crush and add sorrow. When something is said is just as important as what is said and how it is said.

The word translated as "fitly" speaks to not just the right moment of time but also to the right conditions and circumstances. There is beauty in our words. Solomon likens their value to precious gold and silver.

Just as there is a right time to say something, there is a wrong time. If we are not careful and attuned to the Holy Spirit, we will attempt to help but instead cause pain. We will think we are ministering grace to the hearers, but we are really crushing a bruised spirit.

There is a right time to say what needs to be said. Even wise rebuke and constructive criticism are valuable and can be well received when given at the right time (vs. 12). There is also a wrong time to say things. When someone has a heavy heart, that is not the time for a happy song (vs. 20)! That may seem disingenuous and even insulting to their pain. Colossians 4:6 says, "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person." Our words should add just the right flavor to any situation. We should be aptly equipped to speak life in every setting.

We are called to encourage, admonish, and strengthen fellow believers. To do this, we must ask the Holy Spirit for help! The Holy Spirit helps us operate in grace and tact so that when we speak, our words add value to the lives we speak into. He will help us speak the truth in love, rebuke when necessary, comfort, and encourage. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. He can give you the right words at the right time.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 26

Read Proverbs 26

Mind Your Business!

TODAY'S FOCUS

Whoever meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears. Proverbs 26:17

M.Y.O.B. is very wise advice! Yes, the Bible advises minding your own business. This is exceedingly difficult for some. Sometimes you have to involve yourself in others' lives to help. This is especially true when we see others in harm's way which can not help themselves. There are also those called to intercede, exhort, and lead. We should never sit idly by and watch others fall and then say, "I did not know" (Proverbs 24:11-12).

Solomon, however, is not talking about helping others but rather meddling in others' business. Used here, meddles means to "cross over, pass over, to transgress." It refers to crossing another person's boundaries. Getting into another person's disputes is unwise and as dangerous as grabbing a wild dog by the ears!

Intruding in another person's disputes can lead to trouble, no matter how noble your intentions are. Angry discourse, volatile behavior, strained relationships, and far worse can result when you interfere in someone else's fight. You will end up trapped in drama that is not your own. It also can indicate a prideful posture. What makes you think you are assigned to solve everyone's problems? If God did not call you to it, MIND YOUR BUSINESS!

In his letter to the church at Thessalonica, Paul advised believers to "aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" (1 Thessalonians 4:11). We can live peacefully if we attend to our own affairs and not inject ourselves into others' business, uninvited.

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 27

Read Proverbs 27

The Wounds of a Friend

TODAY'S FOCUS

Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. Proverbs 27:5-6

Everyone wants a friend who encourages you, affirms you, and lets you know everything is okay. But we all need a friend that will tell us the truth. The truth can sometimes be hard to hear. No matter how hard, the truth is necessary. And there is no better person to hear it from than a trusted friend.

It is better to receive the "wounds" of friends than the "kisses" of an enemy. To hear that you are going down the wrong path may feel like a wound. To hear that you need to change the look on your face may feel like a wound. To be told that you are just flat-out wrong may feel like a wound when it comes from a friend. If these words are the truth and if they are spoken in love, they are advantageous for you. You have the opportunity to hear these words and respond by growing up spiritually.

Conversely, flattery from those who hold you in disdain is disingenuous and is not to be trusted. Sweet, buttery compliments can feel really good. But when they are insincere, they cause more damage than good. These words deceive the hearer, causing them to feel like they are doing okay when they are really headed for trouble.

Be grateful if you have a faithful friend who tells you the truth. Thank God for the authentic love they show. More importantly, be that friend! Be the one who will be bold enough to speak the truth. You could be saying the very words that help to spiritually restore a friend (Galatians 6:1).

As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend. Proverbs 27:17

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 28

Read Proverbs 28

Confession

TODAY'S FOCUS

He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy. Proverb 28:13

You cannot hide your sins from an all-seeing, all-knowing God. Still, many attempt to conceal the matter rather than confess. God already knows, and He desires to forgive and extend mercy. But we must confess those sins and take accountability for the things we've done.

Confession is important. When we confess our sins, we agree with God's truth. Essentially, we say, "God is right, and we are wrong." When we attempt to hide our sins, it hinders our spiritual growth. John wrote, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). The precious blood of Jesus was shed for all of our sins, past, present, and future. When we admit that we have fallen short, we experience that cleansing power over and over again.

There is always a freedom that comes when we confess our faults to one another. This is not to receive forgiveness of sin. Only God can offer that. But when we confess and confide in other believers, it allows us to pray specific, targeted prayers for one another. Those prayers are powerful and effective in bringing forth healing, wholeness, and restoration (James 5:16).

Not only should we confess our sins, but we should also forsake them. Come into agreement with God's Word, and let go of those sins. Do a complete 180 and go the other way. It may be difficult, but the Holy Spirit who lives on the inside of you is a helper. He will empower you to say no and to walk away. Then you will experience the steadfast loving mercy of God.

Scripture

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 29

Read Proverbs 29

We Need the Word!

TODAY'S FOCUS

Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law. Proverbs 29:18

The Word of God is powerful and mighty. It is a treasure of great worth. In Solomon's time, the written Word was still being revealed to human writers. Praise God, we now have the written Word of God at our disposal. However, an absence of God's Word has immediate and distressing consequences.

People exhibit a lack of restraint when there is no revelation of God's Word. People want to live any way they want. They do not want to adhere to God's truth. They do not want to live according to His ways.

Sadly, this is true for many believers. The Word is not a mainstay in their lives. Therefore, they live a life that lacks discipline and self-control. Conversely, those who avail themselves to reading and hearing God's Word, then obeying what they have been taught, are happy and blessed. The truth is, we need the Word!

We must live a life where the Word of God is a significant part. God's Word helps us live spiritually healthy lives. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "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." The Word of God corrects us when we are wrong. It teaches us how to live godly lives. We are transformed by God's Word so that we will not conform to the world's standard (Romans 12:2). When we align ourselves with God's Word, it equips us to do the work of the Lord. We need the Word!

SCRIPTURE

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 30

Read Proverbs 30

Some Things are Certain

TODAY'S FOCUS

For *as* the churning of milk produces butter, and wringing the nose produces blood, so the forcing of wrath produces strife. Proverbs 30:33

Some things are certain in life. When you do certain things, you can expect certain outcomes. "If you play with fire, you will get burned" is a well-known idiom expressing this same thought.

Agur, the writer of Proverbs 30, used the same kinds of analogies to make his point. He said that just as churning milk will inevitably produce butter and wringing your nose will eventually lead to a nosebleed, when you provoke a person it will lead to anger and strife.

Many places in the Bible warn against anger, especially anger that is without cause (Matt. 5:22). We need not act out in anger. Along with this, we need to be so loving that we do not act to pull out t in people. One churn does not result in butter. You have to keep on churning. Twisting a nose once does not instantly bring forth blood, but those sensitive blood vessels will soon break if you continue to twist it. Scripture warns against provoking a person (Galatians 5:26). It is not loving and certainly is not considering others' feelings above your own (Philippians 2:3).

Many times a person can act surprised by some angry responses, but they have prodded and poked at areas they knew would be explosive. You cannot provoke someone and feign surprise when they respond in anger. Take responsibility! If you are constantly provoking people to anger, check your heart and amend your ways. Walk in love and care deeply about others.

Some things are certain in life. If you are provoking people to anger, you are certainly responsible for stirring up strife. And where there is strife, be certain there is confusion and every evil thing (James 3:16).

Scripture

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

DAY 31

Read Proverbs 31

From the Inside Out

TODAY'S FOCUS

Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Proverbs 31:30

Chapter 31 of Proverbs is the most famous chapter in the book. It includes the description of the Virtuous Women. This wise and efficient woman has great worth to her husband, family, and community. Her worth is above even the finest rubies. She is to be praised.

As we read through this description, what is absent is just as important as what is included. There is no physical description of this ideal woman. We know nothing about her physical features–the length of her hair, the size of her waist, the color of her eyes. These things are not unimportant, but they do not make this woman ideal. It's what's on the inside that matters most.

Today's world values the outside above the inside. Hair, make-up, fashion, and the like is big-money business. Far too often, we are swept away and consumed with what we look like to others. But we fail to focus on what matters most to God. It is what made the Virtuous Woman a woman worthy of adoration.

This model woman is industrious, wise, gracious, and responsible. These qualities emanate from the inside. But more than anything else, this ideal woman is one who would reverently worship the Lord. When we focus on the outside, we are focusing on temporal things. Charm and physical beauty are deceitful because it does not last. No matter how good your genes are, your looks will change. To put all of your emphasis there will leave you wanting spiritually.

Peter admonished women not to emphasize their outer appearance but to be known by "a gentle and quiet spirit." He says this is "very precious in the sight of God" and is the mark of "incorruptible beauty" (1 Peter 3:3-4).

As we read and remember this description of the Virtuous Woman, let's remember it is the inside that matters most. If you want to pattern your life after this model, know that it works from the inside out.

Scripture

Notes

Keywords

Related scriptures

NOTES

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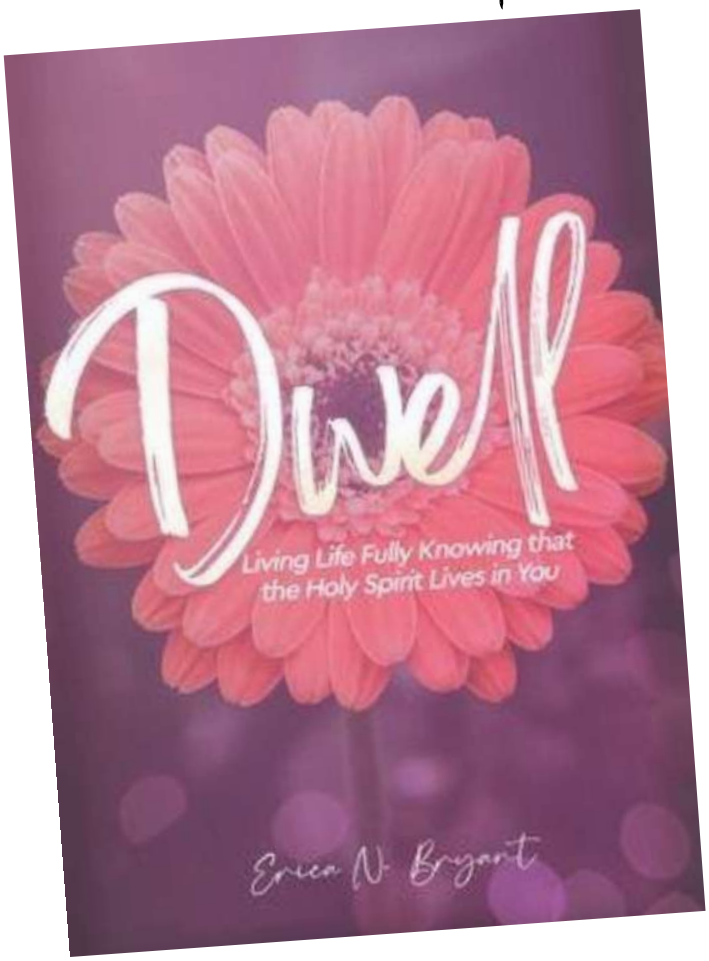

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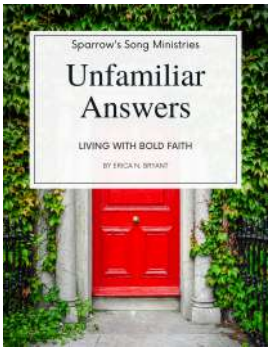

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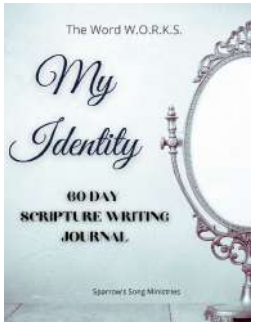

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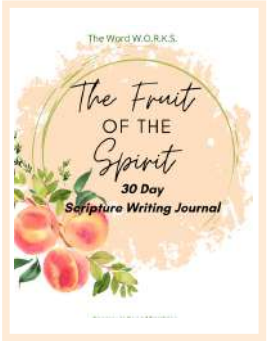

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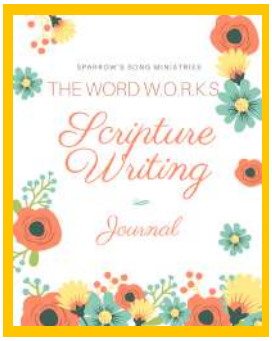

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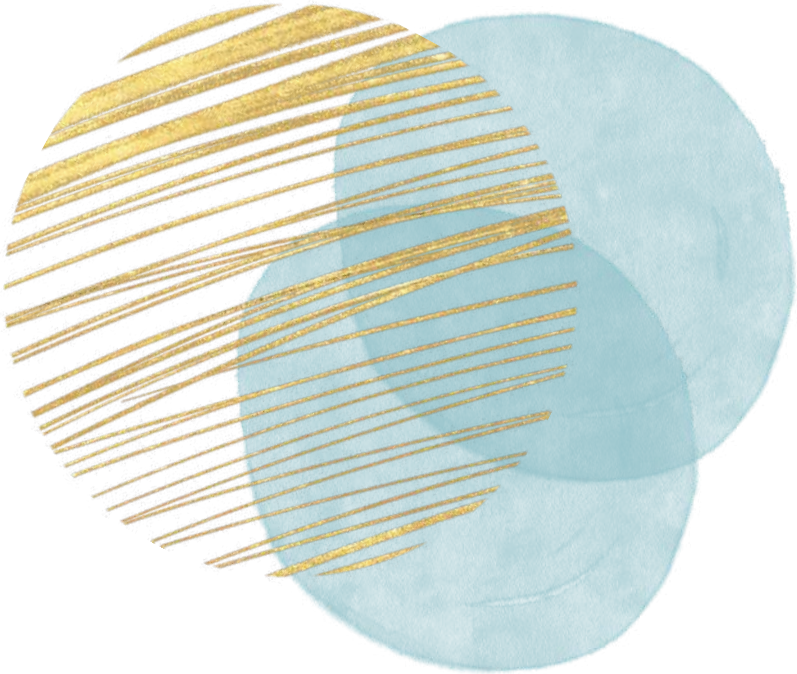
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