

Core Course on Wisdom
Proverbs 8 Louie

Proverbs chapter 8 is the core course in the teacher's curriculum on wisdom.

Outline:

1. Wisdom calls to all mankind. 1-5
2. Wisdom speaks what is noble. 6-11
3. Wisdom gives counsel. 12-16
4. Wisdom grants honor. 17-21
5. Wisdom has a past present and future 22-36

1. Wisdom calls to all mankind. 1-5

A. Wisdom's call is certain 8:1

"Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice?" These are rhetorical questions, and the answer is YES! Wisdom not only calls, she shouts! She cares too much to be silent. The matters at stake are too important to whisper.

B. Wisdom's call is public 8:2-3

"On the heights along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand; beside the gates leading into the city, at the entrances, she cries aloud."
Wisdom is like a street preacher or watchman warning the city.

C. Wisdom's call is personal 8:4-5

"To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding."
This is addressed to the human family because every human being has a great capacity for simple-minded foolishness.

Wisdom's point is this: Do not live outside the boundaries of God's ways.

One has to really work to ignore wisdom, because she is always speaking clearly and loudly everywhere – at the gates, the crossroads, the entrances.

2. Wisdom speaks what is noble. 6-11

Proverbs 8:6-8 - Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right. My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness. All the words of my mouth are just; none of them is crooked or perverse.

See how confident wisdom is? She comes on strong, wanting to win us over. Nothing builds confidence like truth, and nothing destroys it like lies. Wisdom is concerned with ethics – with what is right and what is wrong.

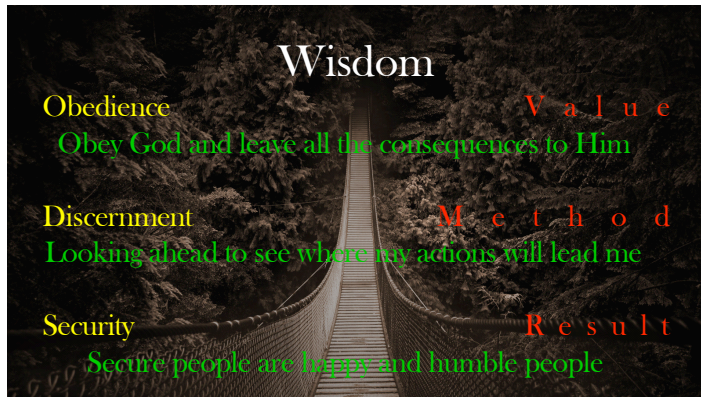
Proverbs 8:9-11 - To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless to those who have knowledge. Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.

In I Kings 3, God told Solomon He would give him whatever he asked for. Solomon asked for humility and a discerning heart to govern God's people. God was pleased with this request and He blessed Solomon with great riches as well.

Wisdom's speech illustrates the intimate relationship between wisdom and rule. More than anything, wisdom desires good government. But good government begins with good self-rule, then moves to good family government, church government and government of a nation. Without moral citizens, an open, free society cannot function.

If we were to live by bread alone and not by every word that comes from the mouth of God, then any means to get bread, even stealing, would be acceptable.

What rule am I under – the rule of God's wisdom or the rule of my own selfish desires?



Proverbs 8:12 - "I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion."

True wisdom solves problems and helps people. (See the story of Solomon and the two mothers who both claimed the same baby in I Kings 3).

I Kings 3:28 - When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice.

Wisdom provides perspective to see issues clearly so the one in charge can courageously lead.

Proverbs 8:13-14 - To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power.

Wisdom has strong convictions and hates evil.

Proverbs 8:15-16 - By me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; by me princes govern, and all nobles who rule on earth.

The most powerful people on earth are generally rulers. Wisdom is trying to get them to be leaders. Those who rule well do so by virtue of their relationship to wisdom. A successful ruler is an ethical ruler.

Proverbs 8:17-19 - I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver.

One must pursue a love relationship with wisdom. The motivation is for the pursuit of honor. This is better than riches! Why is wisdom first priority? Wisdom keeps us honest and therefore honorable.

Merit

I owe it to myself and to God to be responsible.

Entitled

Everybody owes me something.

The framework of our culture has shifted from merit to entitlement. The entitlement framework is not sustainable and not honoring to God.

Proverbs 8:22-23 - "The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began."

The entire section describes the interrelationship between wisdom and creation. The point: One must know wisdom in order to get around in God's creation.

Wisdom cares about you! She has no plans to exploit you, no desire to use then abandon you. Your welfare is her aim. This is why she was created – to bless you.

Proverbs 8:24-27 - When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep,

Wisdom is saying: If anyone knows how to live, it's me! Please listen and follow me!

Proverbs 8:30-31 - Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind.

Wisdom was not only present at creation, but also a participant in it.

Proverbs 8:32-33 - "Now then, my sons, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it.

Wisdom speaks about her role in creation so that she can say this: "God acquired me first, so you must do the same."

Proverbs 34-36 - Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the LORD. But whoever fails to find me harms himself; all who hate me love death.

What will we love? What will we hate?

The tug of war between wisdom and folly for the heart is perpetual in Proverbs. Here it is featured as a stark and simple summary of how wisdom sees the issues. They are white and black. - David Hubbard

We all have a perpetual need for wisdom. We need to make the choice to embrace wisdom every day.

Luke 2:40 - And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

We can be filled with wisdom, just as Christ was filled with it.

Luke 11:31 (NLT) - The queen of Sheba will stand up against this generation on judgment day and condemn it, for she came from a distant land to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Now someone greater than Solomon is here—but you refuse to listen.

Matthew 11:18-19 - For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."' But wisdom is proved right by her actions.

Jesus claims that His behavior represents wisdom itself.

1 Corinthians 1:24 - Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 1:30 - God made Christ to be wisdom itself.

Colossians 2:3 - In Christ lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, As we celebrate Christmas and Your gift to us of Your only Son, we are reminded that He has become for us wisdom from You. In Him we are granted redemption, righteousness and holiness. You reveal the wealth of Heaven's secrets to those You have called Your own. Help us to respond with obedience and leave the consequences to You. Deepen our discernment to look ahead and see where our actions will lead us. Empower us to live securely in You as people who are happy and who humbly love You and others well. Amen.

Benediction:

Go forth blessed to know that the Lord has declared, "I love those who love Me, and those who seek Me find Me. With Me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver." Treasure His gifts to you.