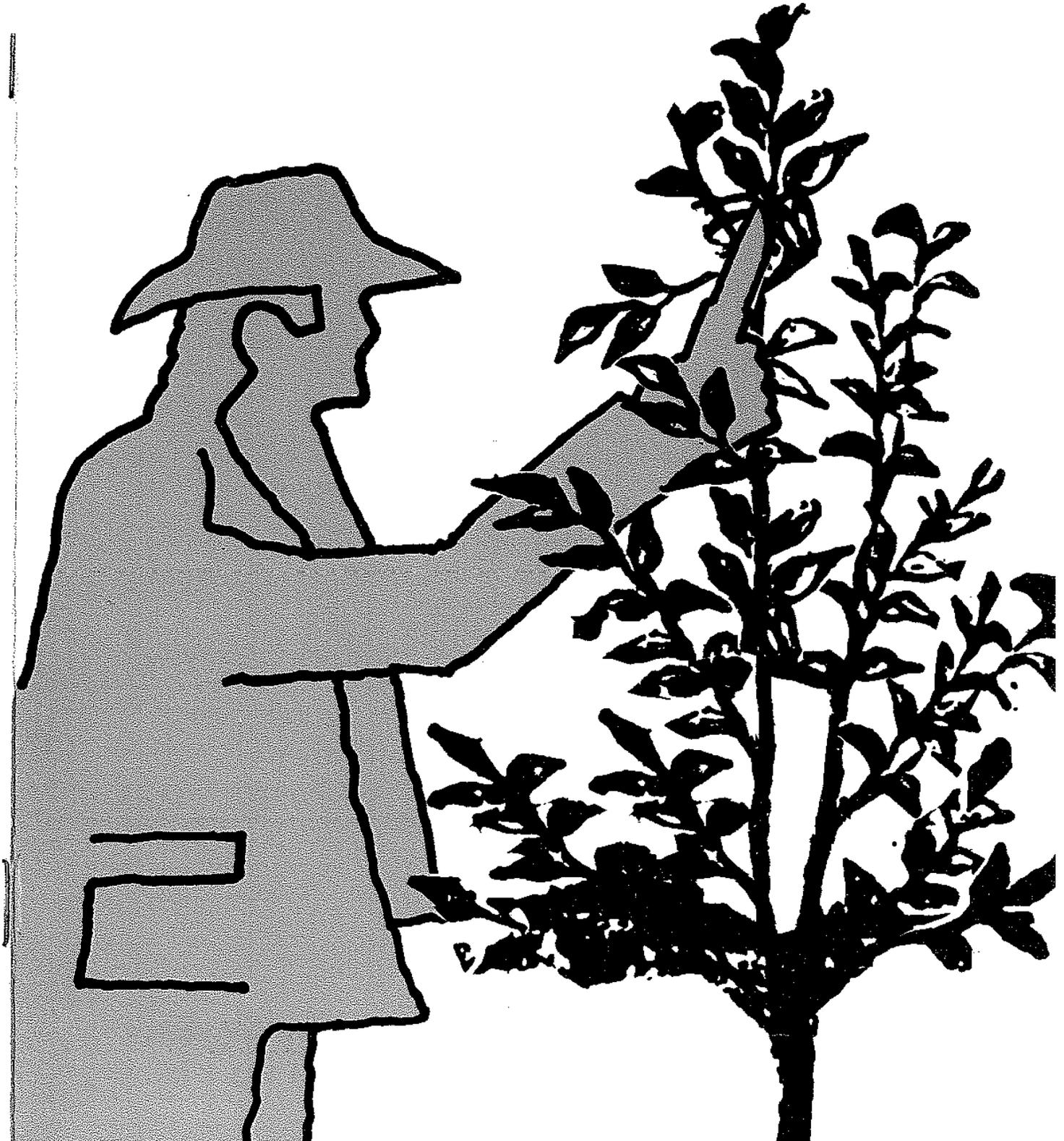


ADULT BIBLICAL EDUCATION SERIES

Vol. II, Book 12
Wisdom for Living
prepared by
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TEACHER'S GUIDE



Pictured on the cover is the Sower, pruning the tree so that it may bear good fruit. We note its increased growth over the year so that it may soon bear fruit.

John 15:1-2 comes to mind as we reflect on this picture: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit."

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Teacher's Supplement to Volume II, Book 12 WISDOM FOR LIVING

This final quarterly in the Old Testament series focuses on three books of wisdom found in Scripture: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. Each one deals with the practical problems of life and each challenges believers to show their faith by their practical living.

We ought to remember that wisdom is the ability to apply God's Word to all facets of one's life. We have now studied most of the Old Testament, and it is time to see how the Old Testament teaches us to apply practically what we have learned.

Challenge the class to understand this particular responsibility and goal in this quarter of studies.

As in other volumes, the suggestions for the teacher are given for each lesson of the quarterly. Please do not feel it a necessity to use all of the suggestions we may give or to work in all the Scriptures we may suggest, but select and use what is most helpful to you to meet the needs of your particular study group.

LESSON ONE

Introduction to the Lesson:

You can use this first lesson as an occasion to discuss with them the meaning of wisdom and the purpose of the Book of Proverbs as it is given in Proverbs 1:2-6.

Point out that the word "wisdom" in Scripture means the ability not only to know what God's Word says but also to know how to apply its lessons practically in one's life.

It will help if you point out to them from Psalm 1, the task of the believer both to withstand the counsel of the world and at the same time to grow in knowledge of God's Word, so that he can act wisely and make the right decisions in life.

In fact, you can form your very outline for this lesson from Psalm 1, verses 1 through 3. That is what we shall suggest in the following.

Point One: The heart is the chief thing: Guard it!

Remind the class of the importance placed on the condition of the heart of man in God's sight. Point back to the practice of circumcision as a sacrament to teach the necessity of the people having clean hearts.

You can remind them of the importance Moses placed on heart-obedience, in Deuteronomy. Note, also, the central place the heart gets in the attention of Jeremiah.

You could also note Ezekiel's emphasis on the heart in calling for cleansed hearts in the people and in the vision of the clean heart, through the symbolism of the temple he saw in his visions.

Note these following points brought out by the father in his talk with his son in this section of Proverbs:

1. Hearts are guarded by fear of the Lord. Point out that fear of the Lord means to believe in the Lord in one's heart. That reserves the heart for God. All we do will then be motivated by our fear (awe) and respect for God. Remind them again that believers show their fear of the Lord by belief in Him. They are therefore called God-fearers. But pagans will also fear God — His wrath and His judgment. Only Christian fear of the Lord is unto salvation.
2. Hearts are guarded by seeking first the things of God. The father taught his son that by setting his heart to please the Lord, he would guard it against all rivals to the Lord. Remind them that Jesus also taught His disciples to seek first the Kingdom of God, thus denying to any rivals any place in their hearts.
3. Hearts are guarded by producing a holy life. Another emphasis of the father in speaking to his son was to teach him to produce in his life that which was to God's glory. Compare this with Psalm 1, where we are taught that the good tree produces good fruit (compare Jesus' similar teaching in Matthew 7:17).
4. Hearts are guarded by being guided by wisdom from God. Remind them that we all need the light of God's Word to be led to true wisdom. Point out the first psalm, in which we learn that the child of God is blessed as he learns to meditate on God's Word, which leads him to wise decisions against the counsel of this world.

You could lead the class to discuss modern-day temptations against which the believer must guard his heart.

Point Two: Lady Wisdom will show the way.

Remind them of how the father used the analogy of two women to stress to the son how he ought to give his heart to God and His Word and turn his heart from all evil. You can point out that this and the final point will be built around the words of Psalm 1:1-2.

Lady Wisdom shows the way as follows:

1. By calling men to follow her. Note that the father reminded the son that Lady Wisdom called in the streets; she called all, not just a select few, to follow her. The call to wisdom is for all men, but only a few will follow.
2. By promising happiness to those who do follow her. Remind them of what true happiness is. "Happiness" is the same as "blessedness," and Psalm One teaches how one is blessed by meditating on God's Word and by bearing fruit to God's glory in his life.
3. By teaching those who will learn. Here, you can remind the class of what Paul said about God's Word: it is profitable for teaching, for reproving, for correcting, for instructing in righteousness, until the man of God is fully equipped for every good service (II Tim. 3:16,17).
4. By revealing all pretense and hypocrisy. Stress the importance of our learning through God's Word what we are really like, before we can become what God would have us to be. Therefore, His Word does reprove us, convict us, and show up our failures. Remind them that Jeremiah had to break down and destroy before he could build and plant.

Lead the class, from this point, to discuss and contrast the world's view of happiness with the Christian view.

Point Three: Mistress Evil will seek to destroy God's child.

From Psalm 1, remind the class that before one can succeed in this life as God's child, he must learn to resist and stand against the counsel and ways of the world. Mistress Evil tends to destroy lives:

1. By leading them ultimately to destruction. The path to ruin never looks like it is leading that way, in the beginning. Help the class to see that the first step away from God's Word in our lives is a step toward the ruination of our lives for the glory of God.
2. By seducing them as a harlot seduces a young man. Point out the appropriateness of the father using the simile of a harlot to represent the allurements of the world to a young man. The

young man would be familiar already with harlots of the street and would know how alluring they can be. The harlot advertises herself as pleasurable and tempts us to indulge in our own gratification. Placing self first is the first step to being seduced by the world into greater and greater sins.

3. By preying on younger men. The father is rightly concerned for his son in the sinful world, knowing that in one's youth is the crucial time when many decisions are made that affect the whole life and that in youth one tends to be both unwise and ambitious for himself. As a harlot can easily flatter a young man into evil, so the world can easily flatter the young people in the church into turning from God to men for companionship and for fulfillment.
4. By offering to men what the world has already approved of. Help the class to see that what is offered to them from the world has the world's approval. What is evil in God's sight may be that which men readily approve, so that it is folly to estimate the worth of any deed or pursuit from the view of the world and worldly people who will approve what God will not. We must realize that the counsel of the world may seem to men as good and proper, but it would be devastating for the child of God to adopt it for his own guide.

Discussion of this point may center on thinking of many things which the world approves daily but which are not to God's glory.

LESSONS TWO THROUGH NINE

Introduction:

The remaining lessons from the Book of Proverbs deal with very practical matters. We have sought to give to you some applications of the proverbs found here to the life of God's people in Old Testament times. Since the lessons are so very practical and the examples so many, you, as the teacher, ought to approach these lessons primarily as discussion times. Give the class full opportunity to discuss selected proverbs and particularly to seek together some examples from present day life which apply to the Proverbs in the manner in which we took examples from Old Testament times.

It is important that you go to the class prepared for discussion by having selected some proverbs to discuss, but also allowing time for some members to discuss others within the scope of the lesson. You should also have in mind some examples from life today, as well. It could be profitable to go to the New

Testament for examples from there, as well, which apply to the Proverbs which you have selected for discussion.

Do not hurry the class on. If you only discuss two or three proverbs and their application to our lives today, you will have accomplished the most important goal: stressing to the class the practical nature of the Book of Proverbs.

In dealing with lessons 6-8, which are more structured according to outline form, nevertheless, here, too, you can discuss the practical application of the points made to our life today.

LESSON TEN

Remind the class of some points made in the introduction to this lesson: there are two different points of view about life given here; Solomon's view is given first; it is a hopeless view; the author's view is given next, beginning with 2:24. It is a view with real hope.

We suggest that you first discuss the "Preacher's" view, and compare it to the attitudes of many today who have no real hope and have become cynical (compare Ps. 1:1).

After this, discuss the author's view — the Biblical view — which shows that true happiness is found when we learn to do all we do to God's glory, as a service for Him. This includes our daily jobs which we pursue.

Get the class to think about the various motivations people have today for their jobs: to earn a living, to get ahead, to store up money, to get rich, to buy luxuries, or just "because." Get them to think about how the Biblical view differs from these. Point to Ephesians 6:5-9 and to Colossians 3:22-4:1 and lead them to see how their own jobs will be changed by taking this Biblical point of view.

LESSON ELEVEN

Structure this lesson around the fear of the Lord and take examples from the proverbs studied in this section to discuss further the concept of the fear of the Lord as we cope with life today.

Get the class to structure together the outline for a lesson from this section which could be used with the youth of the church. Perhaps you can even use the outline later by getting some member of the class to teach the lessons learned to the youth at some Bible study, under the guidance of the officers of the church.

LESSON TWELVE

A very good way to cover the points of this lesson would be actually to dramatize it in the classroom. Since the various speakers have all been designated in our lesson and the passages attributed to each have been noted, you, as teacher, could assign to each participant in the drama his or her part and then let them take the class time to dramatize the message of the Book by each reading his or her part at the appropriate time. They will have to mark the verses in their Bibles before they begin. If you are prepared, this will not take long.

After they have covered the Book in dramatic fashion, then get them to discuss what its effect would have been on Israelite society in the days after Solomon's time.

LESSON THIRTEEN

We will give to you below the answers to the questions with our reasons for some of the answers:

1. True, because what she thought in her heart led her to ignore God's Word and desire the forbidden fruit.
2. False, Adam tried to deny any guilt.
3. True, these two are later identified in Scripture as 'Cain, of the evil one' and "righteous Abel," who offered his sacrifice by faith.
4. False, because we learn that they intermarried with the children of men (unbelievers).
5. True, Noah predicted that Ham's descendants would serve both Shem and Japheth and that Japheth would abide in Shem's tents.
6. True, though this may not necessarily mean that there were none righteous between those two men.
7. False, he left before his father died, if we follow the figures given of the lengths of the lives of his father and of himself.
8. False, though his faith grew, it grew by ups and downs.
9. True, he even pleaded with God to accept Ishmael.
10. True, most of the focus is on Abraham and Jacob.
11. False, he lost it because he despised it. His heart was not right.
12. False, his whole life proved that he cared not at all for spiritual things.
13. False, Jacob at first seemed to have no faith, though he had a sense of spiritual values. Only after a long period of humbling is faith evident

in him.

14. False, Jacob's greatest failing was his failure to discipline his own children.
15. False, even Joseph showed pettiness and self-ambition, as well as a tendency to bring evil reports to his father about his brothers, not reports of evil, but evil reports.
16. True, the record in Genesis moves toward the reconciliation of the brothers with one another, as they became reconciled to God.
17. True, Moses tried to fight for them, but without God's guidance. This forced him to leave the land for 40 years.
18. False, his works of wonder were to show to the people that God had sent him, in order that they would accept him as a spokesman for God. Only the Word of God could bring them to faith.
19. False, he was kept out of Canaan because he behaved with impatience and anger toward the Israelites and thus did not glorify God.
20. False, God gave the sacrament of circumcision to Abraham.
21. True, God only showed him His back, but He revealed to Him His nature, verbally (Ex. 34:6,7).
22. False, most of them died in the wilderness in unbelief, according to 1 Corinthians 10 and Jude, verse 5.
23. False, they avoided Edom because God commanded them to do so.
24. True, most of Israel that had refused to enter into the land of Canaan earlier were dead, when Israel entered under Joshua.
25. True, Hebrews tells us that the tabernacle was a pattern of heavenly things.
26. False, no sooner was Joshua's generation dead than they departed from God's Law.
27. False, Hebrews 11 teaches us that many of the judges were men of faith; they were, however, poor examples of godly life.
28. True, they lived in the times of the judges.
29. False, though he lived with and was brought up with the evil sons of Eli, his parents visited him yearly and from them he learned more accurately the way of faith.
30. False, Samuel's anger was because they had rejected his judgeship over them and had rejected God from being their king and wanted to be like the other nations.
31. True, he was with them, counseling them to the end.
32. False, Samuel thought the older brother would be God's choice.
33. True, David came out in the faith in the Lord which he had learned as a shepherd
34. False, though many followed David, he never organized them to overthrow Saul, nor would he permit them to do so.
35. True, as is seen in his mournful dirge, recorded in II Samuel 1.
36. False, he failed to deal with his enemies, even those under him.
37. False, he sinned many times, but he learned to grow from his failures.
38. True, the Chronicler gives more space to this than to the rest of his life.
39. False, weaknesses in his character are seen from early times.
40. False, Hezekiah and Josiah were two of the outstanding righteous kings, but not the only two.
41. True, Solomon carried out the wishes of his father in this respect with few exceptions.
42. True, he failed to discipline both his sons and his subordinates, such as Joab.
43. True.
44. 44". True, this is why John is later called "Elijah."
45. True, thus emphasizing the importance of their preliminary work to the coming of the writing prophets.
46. True, after his time it did not reappear in Israel, though it did continue to flourish for some time in the south.
47. False, Hezekiah, unlike his father, Ahaz, obeyed the words of Isaiah.
48. True, after him were only four weak kings, all evil.
49. False, there were various captivities over a long period of several years.
50. True, though this cannot be proved.
51. False, his major concern was the failure of joy in the people, which indicated a dying out of the fruits of God's Spirit in them.
52. True, as Peter quoted that passage at Pentecost.
53. Fate, he is just the opposite.
54. False, just the opposite.
55. True, he rebuked the rich and powerful sinners in Samaria who trampled God's people under foot.
56. True, through an unfaithful wife and a broken

- heart.
57. False, he dwelt largely on God's case against Israel.
 58. False, he did write of things that would happen after the Babylonian Captivity, but he lived prior to the fall of Judah.
 59. True, from Chapters 40 to 66, he writes particularly to the believers in Judah, the remnant.
 60. True, in Chapter 53.
 61. True, he was a later contemporary of Isaiah.
 62. True, in Chapter 5.
 63. True, though he had positive things to say about God's people as well.
 64. False, he prophesied of the overthrow of Nineveh.
 65. True, he cried to God to do something about them.
 66. False, God changed Habakkuk's attitude, not the circumstances.
 67. True, according to 1:1.
 68. True, but he was not the only one who spoke of the remnant.
 69. True, he lived both before and after the time of the fall.
 70. False, he shows his great sorrow in the Book of Lamentations.
 71. False, he tried, but failed, and they took him with them to Egypt.
 72. True, Ezekiel also lived both before and after the fall of Jerusalem.
 73. False, the new temple in his vision was built by God, not men.
 74. False, Daniel lived prior to the fall of Jerusalem and long after that time, contemporary with Ezekiel and Jeremiah.
 75. False, God elevated him to that position by giving him great wisdom which impressed the king.
 76. False, all of them proved to be faithful.
 77. True, they lived in the later Persian period.
 78. True, by that time the Jews had returned, but Ezra and Nehemiah had not yet appeared on the scene.
 79. False, he began by telling of the first return to Jerusalem in Zerubbabel's days.
 80. True.
 81. True, though Ezra arrived there first.
 82. False, it was not written for that purpose. It was written to lead the people to see the importance of the priesthood and of the sacerdotal system to Israel's history.
 83. True, though they are not mentioned in Job.
 84. False, that question is answered in chapter 1. The Book answers the question whether or not God ever deserts His own.
 85. False, he denied this, claiming to be righteous, by his faith in the Lord. He was assured God had forgiven his sins.
 86. False, though David wrote many of the Psalms.
 87. True, by our interpretation.
 88. True.
 89. False, though he wrote many of the proverbs.
 90. True, they form an introduction to the entire Book.
 91. False, there are two separate sections of them.
 92. True, showing the importance of family responsibilities.
 93. False, the opening words of the first two chapters are mostly his, but not all of them.
 94. False, he gives to us a very hopeless outlook on life, contradicted by the rest of Scripture.
 95. True, particularly in the latter part.
 96. True, this is one of its chief themes.
 97. False, it was written to counter Solomon's example.
 98. False, it condemns such a practice.
 99. True, in dramatic form.
 100. False, it was the last one we studied, but it is neither last in the English Bible (Malachi is) nor the last in the Hebrew Bible (II Chronicles is).

Part Two:

We suggest that the latter part of the review be read by all members of the class at home. If time allows, some of its chief points may be brought out in class: Stress the importance of remembering these two key verses {Gen. 3:15; Eph. 1:4), as we go into the study of the New Testament.