



Proverbs

◇ WEEK 4

Proverbs 31

Introduction

Welcome to the last week of our *Proverbs* series! Together, we've studied key points of this wisdom literature to help us understand how to live well. It's not some secret code for "the good life," but it is full of suggestions for wise and thoughtful choices. As we wrapped up our time in this book, we got a picture of what it looks like for a "seasoned veteran" who's been practicing these principles of wisdom for a long time in Proverbs 31.

Discussion

1. The last chapter of Proverbs can often be reduced down to a list of to-dos or standards Christians – particularly women – are expected to measure up to (often resulting in a lot of guilt and shame). Instead, we have an opportunity to learn about the deeper work occurring in the woman's spirit and motivation that lead to these incredible results. How have you read Proverbs 31 in the past? How does this perspective shift impact your engagement with the text?
2. Instead of allowing the "fruit" or benefits of wisdom to act as our motivation, we were encouraged to "focus on the root that grows the fruit." Here, we are intent on our relationship with God first, trusting our desire and ability to choose wisely will grow with Him. Have you seen this "root-focused" growth play out this way in your life? How? Take some time to share how you can grow in your relationship with God now and how that investment may produce wisdom down the road.
3. **Revisit & read Deuteronomy 10:12.** One of the overarching themes in Proverbs is the "fear of the Lord." Before learning about this concept from Pastor John, what was your initial impression with this phrase? How has it shaped your relationship or perception of God in the past?
4. The fear of the Lord isn't just being scared of God or respecting Him. It's a result of recognizing His greatness – being amazed by how big, powerful, and loving He actually is. Have you had awestruck moments of wonder – maybe in sports, music, or witnessing the grandness of the ocean/mountains? Share these experiences with your group and the feelings they stirred in you. Are they easy to look back on and remember? Why or why not?
5. **Revisit and read Isaiah 6:1-5.** Now think about your answers from the previous question. Have you had any similar moments with God? How does this view of the fear of the Lord as awestruck wonder (that reminds you of who He really is and what He is able to do) reshape your view and relationship to Him now?

Application

1. **Get Out of Your Head.** It's hard to stand in awe of God when we're racing through our day. Calendar time to get away and place yourself in environments to be in awe of God. Whether it's stargazing, witnessing a sunset, or listening to moving music – find what works for you.
2. **Ask God to Show Himself to You.** If prayer (conversation with God) is new to you, it may be simpler than you think. All you have to do is ask! You can approach your relationship with Him like any other – just reach out and talk wherever you are, asking for understanding and wisdom.
3. **Quit the Comparison Game.** If you find yourself stuck in guilt and shame, perhaps it's because you're focused on what you "could" or "should" be doing. God doesn't expect us to instantly transform into perfectly wise human beings. Start with one area where you want to grow in obedience with God, identify the root below your current behavior, invite God into this place with you, and start practicing.