

# Bible Reading Notes

## Proverbs 1-5

### How to use these Bible reading notes

These Bible reading notes are a resource to help you feed on God's word and allow it to change your life. 'A little and often' is a good motto. If you miss a day (or several!), don't feel guilty or try to catch up; just pick up wherever you left off – it doesn't matter if it's the wrong date.

Here are some tips on how to get the most out of this:

1. Find a time and place where you can be quiet but awake. Maybe set an alarm on your phone to remind you each day.
2. Pray: ask God to help you understand what he says.
3. Use the notes to help you think about the passage (use a good translation of the Bible like the NIV).
  - 'Read' tells you which verses to read
  - 'Apply' shows how it affects you
  - 'Pray' suggests ways to talk to God about it
4. Pray about what you have read. You might also like to use the Church Prayer Diary.
5. Look for a chance to share with someone what God has been saying to you.

---

*These notes are easy to install on most phones or tablets. Install the 'PrayerMate' App and you'll find it under 'subscribe to online feeds' and 'Devotional'. It's called St Philemon's Bible Notes. If you have any problems, email [miriam@stphilemons.co.uk](mailto:miriam@stphilemons.co.uk).*

# 1

This month we're reading Proverbs 1-5. A proverb is a short, memorable saying, stating something true or a piece of advice.

## **Read Proverbs 1:1-6**

- Where do these proverbs come from?
- What benefit can these proverbs bring?
- Who are they for?

## **Apply**

- What will you need to do so that you benefit from Proverbs (v. 5)?
- How do you feel about learning what Proverbs can teach?
- In what ways would you like to become wiser?

## **Pray**

- Thank God for any wisdom that he has already taught you.
- Ask God to help you listen to Proverbs, and to make you wise.

## **Read Proverbs 1:7**

- What is the foundation of all true knowledge and wisdom?
- What do you think the 'fear of the Lord' means?
- What makes someone a fool?

## **Apply**

- How much do you care about what God says when making decisions?
- What is your attitude to wisdom and instruction (maybe when someone tries to teach you something, or offer advice to you?)

## **Pray**

- Thank God that he has told us how to live in his word, the Bible.
- Ask God to help you listen humbly to the wisdom and instruction that comes from him.

**Read Proverbs 1:8-9**

- Who does God teach us wisdom through according to these verses?
- What does it mean to say this teaching is like fine jewellery (v. 9)?

**Apply**

Even Jesus learned wisdom from his parents! *'Then [Jesus] went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.'* Luke 2:51-52.

- How do you think about your parents' advice and what they have taught you about life? Is it something you value, like fine jewellery, or something you despise?
- If you have children yourself, how might you teach them to love and fear the Lord (v. 7)?
- What is your attitude to the advice and opinions of people older than you?

**Pray**

- Thank God for parents or older people who have taught you wisdom – especially the true wisdom that is found in Jesus Christ!
- Ask God to help you value their wisdom.

**Read Proverbs 1:10-19**

- What kind of activity are the 'sinful men' up to (vv. 11-14)?
- Why might it be attractive (vv. 13-14)?
- What is the wise response? Why?

**Apply**

- Have you, or maybe someone else you know, ever been tempted to join a gang?
- How does this passage from Proverbs help us to see that it isn't a good idea? Where does it lead to?
- This behaviour leads to death (v. 19) – so what will the wisdom that God gives here lead to?

**Pray**

- Thank God that his instruction brings life.
- Ask that God would make you wise when you're tempted to join in with something you know is bad, that you would fear him and follow his good ways instead.

## **Read Proverbs 1:20-23**

- How hard is it to find God's wisdom (v. 20-21)?
- But how do we and others very often respond to God's wisdom? Why?
- What might we need to do to hear wisdom's voice?

## **Apply**

- Where can you find God's wisdom?
- Is there anything you know God is saying right now in his Word, but you are refusing to listen to? What is the warning here?
- What is the promise to those who repent (turn back to God)?

## **Pray**

- Thank God that he hasn't hidden his wisdom from us.
- If you need to, say sorry to God for 'simple ways' you have loved instead of listening to him.

**Read Proverbs 1:24-33**

- What is the foundation – the beginning – of wisdom and knowledge? (*remember Proverbs 1:7, ‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.’*)
- Why can’t those in this passage find wisdom?
- What are the consequences?

**Apply**

- What could you do to remind yourself through today that ‘the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge?’

**Pray**

- Ask God to help you listen to and fear him today.

**Read Proverbs 2:1-5**

- What is the teacher telling his son he must do?
- What will he find if he does?

**Apply**

*In Matt 13:44, Jesus says 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.'*

- What are you urgently looking for in your life?  
How does your search for knowledge of God compare to this?
- Look at the things the son is told to do in vv. 1-4: 'accept', 'store up', 'turn your ear', 'apply your heart', 'call out', 'look', 'search'. Choose one, and think about how you could start doing this, or do more of it.
- Make a plan to do that this week.

**Pray**

- Ask God to help you see that knowing him in Jesus is the greatest treasure.



## 8

Yesterday, we saw that wisdom – knowledge of God – has to be searched for like a hidden treasure.

### **Read Proverbs 2:6-8**

- Where is wisdom found?
- ‘Upright’, ‘blameless’, ‘just’ and ‘faithful’ are ways of speaking about the person who fears the Lord. What does God hold for the person who fears him?

### **Apply**

- Jesus is the only person who has ever perfectly feared God – during his life on earth he was perfectly upright, blameless, just and faithful. What did God’s success and protection look like in his life?
- What might it look like in the lives of his followers?

### **Pray**

- Praise Jesus that he is so perfectly wise and perfectly faithful.
- Thank God for the wisdom that comes from his mouth and that is seen most perfectly in his Son.

Yesterday we saw that God 'protects the way of his faithful ones' (v. 8).

### **Read Proverbs 2:9-11**

- How (v. 11) does God do this?
- What makes a path 'good' (v. 9)?

### **Apply**

*In Matt 7:24-25, Jesus says that 'everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.'*

- What is your attitude to the things Jesus commands you to do?
- What does being wise (listening to and doing what Jesus says) bring?
- How might this change your attitude?

### **Pray**

- Thank God that Jesus' words and his commands are wise and that they protect and guard us.

## Read Proverbs 2:12-15

- According to these verses, what will wisdom protect you from?
- Look back at Proverbs 1:10. What is the danger that wicked men like these bring?

## Apply

- Can you think of anything God has said or commanded that you could 'store up' and learn that would protect you from being tempted to join in with those who love doing wrong (either now or in the future)?
- Why not write this down and try and learn it this week.

## Pray

Jesus taught us to pray, *'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'*.

- Pray through this line of the Lord's Prayer now, bringing to mind any ways you are tempted to join in with wicked people.

## Read Proverbs 2:16-19

- According to these verses, what will wisdom protect you from?
- Where does adultery lead?

## Apply

- Can you think of anything God has said or commanded that you could 'store up' and learn that would protect you from being seduced by adultery (either now or in the future)?
- Why not write this down and try and learn it this week.

## Pray

Jesus taught us to pray, *'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'*.

- Pray through this line of the Lord's Prayer now, bringing to mind any ways you are tempted by sexual immorality, or adultery.

## Read Proverbs 2:20-22

- What will happen to those who fear God, seek wisdom, and listen to him?
- What will happen to the wicked?
- So what is the big thing wisdom from God can protect you from?

## Apply

*In 1 Cor 1:30 the apostle Paul writes that 'It is because of [God] that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.'*

- If you trust and follow Jesus, what will today's verses in Proverbs mean for you?

## Pray

- Thank God that his wisdom can keep you walking in the ways of the good.
- Thank God that in Jesus he has made you wise, righteous, holy and redeemed you.

**Read Proverbs 3:1-4**

- What is the son told to do with what he has been taught?
- Why should he do this?

**Apply**

- Where in your life are you forgetting what God has taught you?
- What practical thing could you do today to keep God's commands in your heart?

**Pray**

- Ask for the Holy Spirit to help you to remember Jesus' teaching in your heart.

## **Read Proverbs 3:5-10**

- Whose wisdom and understanding can you choose to trust in (vv. 5, 7)?
- Why should you trust in the Lord?
- What does the wise person trust God with, in v. 9?

## **Apply**

Verse 10 is a picture of fruitfulness – a life that brings glory to God.

- What do you think is a wise way to use your money?
- What does God say is a wise way to use your money?
- How could you honour God with your money and possessions – ‘the firstfruits of all your crops’?

## **Pray**

- Ask God to help you trust him with every area of your life – especially your money.

**Read Proverbs 3:11-12**

- How does God sometimes treat us?
- How should we respond when he disciplines us?
- Why does God treat us this way?

**Apply**

*Hebrews 12:7 says 'Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children.'*

- Can you think of times of hardship, when God has disciplined you?
- How have you responded to God's discipline?  
Where do you need to change how you respond?

**Pray**

- Praise God that when he disciplines us, it is a reminder that he loves us and that we are his children!



**Read Proverbs 3:13-18**

- Why is wisdom a blessing?
- What does wisdom bring?

**Apply**

- Spend some time thinking about and meditating on the way these verses describe wisdom.

**Pray**

- Ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God.

**Read Proverbs 3:19-20**

- Where can we see God's wisdom at work according to these verses?

**Apply**

- Think about this world that God has made – what does creation tell you about God's wisdom?
- How might this help you to trust him, rather than your own understanding, today?

**Pray**

- Praise God that his wisdom is perfect.
- Praise God that the heavens declare his glory.

**Read Proverbs 3:21-26**

- What do you think the wicked are afraid of?
- Why can the wise sleep without fear?
- So why is wisdom like 'an ornament' – something beautiful?

**Apply**

- How do these verses encourage you to keep your eyes fixed on wisdom and understanding today?

**Pray**

- Ask God to help keep your eyes fixed on his peace-bring life-giving wisdom.

## Read Proverbs 3:27-30

- What does a wise person give to their neighbour?
- What must a wise person not do to their neighbour?

## Apply

Look back at Proverbs 3:5; *'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.'*

- Where are there ways you have been leaning on your own understanding, rather than trusting God, in the way that you treat your neighbours?

*Rom 5:8 reminds us that 'God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.'*

- How does the way God in his wisdom has treated us help us to treat others the way he tells us to?

## Pray

- Ask God to help you to be quick to love your neighbours in practical ways, and to keep you from wanting to harm them.

### **Read Proverbs 3:31-35**

- Why might someone envy the violent or the wicked?
- According to these verses, what does God give to fools (the violent, the perverse, the wicked, mockers)?
- And what does he give to the wise (the upright, the righteous, the humble)?

### **Apply**

- How do these verses help you to understand what it means to fear the Lord?
- How do they help you to do this?

### **Pray**

- Ask God to make you want his blessings, and not to be envious of the wicked.

**Read Proverbs 4:1-9**

- What is the father teaching to his son in these verses?
- Who taught this to the father?
- What attitude did he teach him to have towards wisdom?

**Apply**

- How must you respond if you want to have wisdom?
- What must you teach your children (if you have them) if you want them to have wisdom?

**Pray**

- Ask God to help you to cherish wisdom.
- Pray for your children, God-children, or children in your church: that they will grow up loving wisdom, and paying attention to what they are taught.

### **Read Proverbs 4:10-17**

- What must the son do with the instruction he receives?
- How will wisdom guide him?
- How is wisdom's path better?

### **Apply**

- What might make you tempted to walk on the path that leads to wrongdoing?
- How can these verses help you to choose not to?

### **Pray**

- Ask God to make your love abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.

**Read Proverbs 4:18-19**

- What two paths can a person be on?
- How are they described?

**Apply**

- Which path are you walking on?

*'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life... Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.'* John 3:16, 17-19.

- What must a person do to move from the path of the wicked to the path of the righteous?
- Is there anyone you know walking in darkness that you could share this news with today?

**Pray**

- Praise God for sending his Son, so that whoever believes in him can walk on his path in the light.
- Pray for any you know stumbling in deep darkness, that they might come into the light.



**Read Proverbs 4:20-23**

- Where does everything you do flow from?
- So where must these words of instruction be kept?

**Apply**

- 'Guard your heart' – what in your heart do you most desire?
- What in your heart do you most fear?
- What words from the Bible can you speak to your heart to guard it today?

**Pray**

- Ask God to keep your heart, and to pour his love into your heart through the Holy Spirit.

## Read Proverbs 4:20-27

- Where does everything you do flow from?
- How does your mouth show what is in your heart?
- How do your eyes show what is in your heart?
- How do your thoughts show what is in your heart?

## Apply

- What do *your* mouth, eyes and thoughts tell you about *your* heart?
- Can you think of something you've learned this month in Proverbs that could help you to love God and his wisdom more? Write it down and memorise it to keep it within your heart.

## Pray

- Ask God to transform your heart as he has promised in his gospel, so that life and goodness flows from it.

## **Read Proverbs 5:1-6**

The adulterous woman represents any sexual activity outside of a marriage of husband and wife.

- What do the words of the adulterous woman sound like?
- So why is it important for the son to pay attention to his father's words?
- Where does adultery really lead?

## **Apply**

- In what ways does adultery, or sexual immorality, seem attractive to you?
- What wisdom, or words of insight, could you keep near you to remind you where sexual immorality leads?

## **Pray**

- Ask God to keep you from the deceitfulness of sin.
- Ask God to save the culture and country we live in, where so many have been deceived by sexual sin.

## **Read Proverbs 5:7-14**

- How should the son respond to the adulterous woman?
- What happens to those who go near her?

## **Apply**

- A wise pastor used to say, 'Don't negotiate with your hormones'. Is there some sexual sin that you are drifting close to, or even caught up in? What can you do to flee from it?
- Have you seen the consequences of sexual sin in your own life, or in others' lives? How does this remind you of the foolishness of it?

## **Pray**

- Thank God that you have been washed, made holy, and justified in Jesus.
- Ask God to help you to flee from sexual temptation and pray for anyone you know who struggles in this area.

## **Read Proverbs 5:15-20**

- Have you ever drunk from a fresh, unpolluted spring? Or had a cold, clean glass of water on a hot day? What was it like?
- What is this source of pure, clean water (the spring, or cistern, or well in v15-16) a picture of?
- How is the son to think about his own wife?

## **Apply**

- If you are married, how do you think about, and delight in, your own husband or wife?
- All Christians are, together, the bride of Christ. How do you think about, and delight in, Jesus your Saviour?

## **Pray**

- Ask God to help you (if you are married) and married people in your church to delight in their spouses.
- Ask God to fix your eyes on Jesus, to see that he is truly the water of life.

**Read Proverbs 5:21-23**

- What does the Lord see?
- What do the sins of the wicked do to them?

**Apply**

- How does this teach you about what it means to fear the Lord?
- If sin ensnares and enslaves people, then what does wisdom – fearing God – bring?

**Pray**

*'For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* (Rom 6:23).

- Praise God that in Jesus he has set us free from sin and death to have eternal life in him.