

# Series: God's Wisdom for Life – week 2

CDOBC – beginning on 1/8/12

Title: “The Protection of Wisdom”

January 15, 2012

Proverbs 1:8-33

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**OBJECTIVE:** To help us see that living according to God's wisdom protects us.

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## **Announcements**

- Welcome / guests – communication cards
- Church Directory
- AWANA Grand Prix
- Children's Min need – Ashley Le Files

*Tom Carlson – last Sunday before deployment*

Protection – in football, the offensive line is the most important part of the team. It's like a foundation and a house. Usually, nobody admires the foundation – but without a solid foundation, the house would eventually crumble. In football, if you don't have a good offensive line – then your quarterback is not protected, your running back has no holes to run through.

The offensive line protects against the defensive line. The defensive line wants to tackle the quarterback and tackle the running backs before they can gain any yards.

Offense vs. defense...competes against each other to see who will win – and who will lose.

In life, we also have two sides that compete against each other, and in our passage this morning, we see the two sides matched up against one another.

Wisdom vs. folly/sin

This is the competition between the things of God and the things of the world - 'the world view vs. the Christian view'.

Every day, these two views compete for our attention – and for our loyalty.

Will you listen to the voice of wisdom?

Or will you tune out wisdom's voice?

### **The voice of wise parents** vs. 8-10

8 Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. 9 They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck. 10 My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.

Notice that the words of both parents are of great value. The garland and the chain/necklace represent success and blessing. Both parents are giving a clear warning to their son: avoid the invitation to sin. The warning is clear and direct – there is no confusion here...simply avoid the enticement of sinners.

Parents...what is the best way to deal with peer pressure?

**Persuasive teaching:** Parents need to prepare their kids to understand 'why' God's wisdom is right – and why it's the best choice for them.

Parents and children do not have equal authority in the family, and there are certain situations when the parents must simply lay down the law when necessary...but we must also realize that God's law makes perfect sense – and God's law is the key to joy and pleasure in life – and we need to help our

children...we need to help one another understand this view of God's law and how it relates to our life.

The bible tells us how we should deal with peer pressure – not just peer pressure in the life of a child, but peer pressure we face our entire lives!

### **The voice of temptation** vs. 11-14

11 If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for someone's blood, let's waylay some harmless soul; 12 let's swallow them alive, like the grave, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; 13 we will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder; 14 throw in your lot with us, and we will share a common purse"

This seems a bit extreme. Normally, sin doesn't entice you so blatantly, or with such an extreme message. But remember, this is not an actual conversation – Solomon is making a point. We may think that 'minor' sins are innocent – not a big deal. But Solomon wants us to realize that no matter how sin disguises itself, this is its true nature. Sin is evil – but it is also enticing to our human nature.

Sin's attraction lies in the offer of excitement, danger, effortless wealth and reward, and vs. 12 says that we can escape the consequences because there won't be any witnesses left to testify against us!

We must realize that our human/sinful nature operates on the law of self-interest. Our natural tendency is to think only of ourselves, and live in a way that looks out for #1! But the

believer in Christ should live with different priorities. The Christian is called to “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves...look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Philippians 2:3-4  
*Sinners love wealth and use people; believers are called to use wealth to help people.*

### **The voice of wise parents – pt. 2** vs. 15-19

15 my son, do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths; 16 for their feet rush into sin, they are swift to shed blood.

**17 How useless to spread a net in full view of all the birds!** 18 These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves! 19 Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.

The voice of the parents gives words of protection to their child. Earlier, the message was softer – “...do not give in to them.”  
(vs. 10)

Now, the message is stronger and more direct – “...do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths...”

Even if the planned activities for the evening are innocent and good, don't go with them!

Why?

Because (vs. 16) “...their feet rush into sin, they are swift to shed blood.”

When you hang out with and travel the same path as “sinners” (vs. 10) the innocent activity will turn evil at break-neck speed!

One moment you will be enjoying dinner out – and the next you are in the car on the way to some sinful activity – and you are caught up in the moment with no way out!

Vs. 14 is a great picture for us. If you set a trap for a bird – while the bird is watching, they won't fall for it – they won't take the bait. They're smart enough – and “wise” enough to realize it's a trap.

The parent's words are revealing to you the trap that Satan sets for you – to trap you in sin – and because of the parent's wise counsel, it is in full view. Are you at least as smart as the birds who know enough to avoid a trap...or are the birds smarter than you?

In the end...the activity of sinners which ‘in the moment’ seems like fun, exciting, daring, and adventurous, will actually take your life. (vs. 18-19)

All sin leads to pain and death. It may start out with pleasure, excitement, and independence – but it will steal your soul and your life will be destroyed!

### **Wisdom's invitation to all people** vs. 20-21

20 Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares; 21 at the head of the noisy streets she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech:

Solomon now writes of wisdom as a person who invites all people in every corner of the city to join her. Wisdom's offer is not for a select few – her offer is for all people. In the neighborhood, in the public square, in the noisy street markets, and in the circles of leadership and power at the city gates – she makes her appeal. Notice her appeal is not secretive or mysterious – it's loud and public.

What is your response to wisdom's call?

Wisdom's offer is not ongoing - endless. Her appeal will not continue indefinitely. It will be withdrawn after it is repeatedly rejected and we see that in the next section.

### **Wisdom's voice of warning** vs. 22-25

22 "How long will you simple ones love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? 23 If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you. 24 But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, 25 since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke..."

Solomon gives us three different kinds of people who reject wisdom's offer and call on their life. **First** is the "simple ones". This is the person who has lots of space in their mind...they have no moral or ethical thoughts to guide them. Their mind is wide-open to any idea that appeals to them. **Second** is the "mockers". This is the person who disagrees and ridicules anything that contradicts with their philosophy of life. **Third** is the "fool". This is not a person who lacks intelligence; they simply hate the truth of God and could care less what God says. This is the person who views themselves – their life and their pleasures – as the highest priority in life.

Do any of these sound familiar?

How does God – how does wisdom call out to these people?

What kind of 'offer' does wisdom make them?

Wisdom “rebukes” them – their attitudes – their priorities – their actions.

Vs. 23 “If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you.”

None of us like to be rebuked (synonyms = scolded, chided, reprimanded, corrected, admonished, criticized). But the wise person understands the value in it.

*“Criticism is hard to take; few respond to it with ease. It is ego-damaging, yet accepting it and changing in response to it is the only way to succeed. Soil must be plowed...and broken before it can be used. Clay must be kneaded and pounded before it can be shaped into a useful or beautiful vessel.*

*People too must sometimes be broken in order to have bad habits and attitudes replaced with good ones.”* (From Robert L. Alden’s

*Proverbs: A Commentary on an Ancient Book of Timeless Advice [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1983] p.*

*28 – quoted in the Insight for Living Bible Study Guide, Proverbs, by Charles R. Swindoll, p. 13)*

How do the simple minded, the mocker, and the fool react to wisdom’s rebuke?

Four ways (vs. 24-25):

**First**, they rejected wisdom’s appeal. This is simply refusing to listen – refusing to accept what wisdom says. They say “I don’t believe you – I know better.” The Hebrew word for “rejected” or “refused” is the same word that is used in Exodus of Pharaoh when he refused to let Israel go despite God’s display of power over him.

**Second**, they didn’t care what wisdom said. “...no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand...” They have complete

indifference...they didn't even care enough to consider what wisdom said...they simply tuned out wisdom's words.

Hebrews 5:11 "Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing."

**Third**, they *ignored* wisdom's advice. Typically, we ignore someone because we don't think they know what they're talking about, we think we know more than they do, or we simply don't like the opinion they are sharing with us.

**Fourth**, they *don't like* what wisdom offers. They "...would not accept my rebuke..." wisdom says. Very immature! Like a toddler!

We must realize that the tendency to reject God's wisdom – and to cling to our own desires is a lost cause – a losing battle in the end. History is full of men and women who have rejected God and their life was full of earthly pleasures and power, but in the end, when they face eternity, what was the benefit for them? "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" Mark 8:36

Psalms 2:1-4 "Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? **2** The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. **3** "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters." **4** The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them."

The Lord laughs at the rebellion of mankind. He laughs at them because they actually think they can avoid God's justice. They actually believe that their way of life – their view of life is better than God's! They actually think that they can defeat God and reject His authority by simply ignoring Him!

Nobody likes to be rebuked – whether the rebuke is from a friend, a teacher, a pastor, a boss, a parent, or from God. But the wise person accepts the rebuke, and changes their life so it matches the Word of God – the wisdom of God.

Hebrews 12:11 “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

We also need to realize that wisdom will lead us away from the crowds...away from the popular path and to the way of righteousness.

Matt. 7:13-14

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

C.S. Lewis quote about being in the ‘inner ring’

### **Wisdom’s voice of judgment and blessing vs. 26-33**

Solomon gives a stark warning in this section.

I love that God gives us full disclosure in every area of life.

His message is complete – it contains no small print and at the end of His message there is never an announcer reading a disclaimer in hyper-speed.

God tells us plainly what the end result will be if we refuse the instruction of our father and the teaching of our mother – if we reject the call of wisdom in our life. Our life will be full of difficulty and pain – and that’s the good part! One might even

say that it wouldn't be so bad if we fell short of our potential in the 70-90 years we have life on earth...but God gives us (as Paul Harvey would say) the rest of the story!

26 I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you-- 27 when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you.

28 "Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me.29 Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD,30 since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke,31 they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.32 For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them..."

This seems pretty harsh doesn't it? But remember, this is not a real conversation – nor is it God's first response. It's His final response which will be a response of judgment. The severity and apparent cruelty of wisdom's response is meant to get our attention. If you think God is so loving that He could never judge someone and punish their sins – then you don't know the God of the Bible. God is loving, kind, gracious, merciful and long suffering. He has all of these characteristics beyond our comprehension. But He is also holy, righteous, just, and He must judge sin. If you have rejected God and His wisdom in your life, then **you** have chosen to pay the price for your sin instead of putting your faith in **Christ** and allowing Him to pay for your sins. It's really that simple!

Vs. 33 "...but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm."

This is God's desire for you. His greatest desire is for you to be saved – to put your faith in His Son for the forgiveness of your sins...but it's a decision that you must make. You must choose to embrace His wisdom and His truth.

Jeremiah 8:20 "The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved."

Hebrews 3:15 "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts..."

2 Cor. 6:2 "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

## **Application**

Accept the wisdom of God – His Son, Jesus.

As I mentioned last Sunday, Jesus is the ultimate display of God's wisdom. In Christ the wisdom of God resides, so the first and primary way we accept wisdom's invitation is to accept Christ as our Savior.

Admit your sins

Believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins

Commit to embracing God's wisdom daily

Reject sin's temptations in life

Do not even walk on the same path! (vs. 15)

Vs. 23 "If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you."