



July 6, 2014 | The Search for Wisdom | Proverbs 1:1-7; 9:10

[Q] Discuss: Who is the wisest person you know?

Introduction:

We are beginning a study of the Book of Proverbs that will take us through the summer. We are encouraging people to read one chapter of Proverbs per day. (valleycommunity.cc/resources/proverbs)

Every week we will ask:

[Q] As you read through Proverbs this past week, did you find something that you can apply to your life? Explain.

[Q] Read Proverbs 1:1-4, noting what the Book of Proverbs is good for:

[Q] Read Proverbs 1:5-6. What is the wise response?

Apply:

[Q] How will you pursue wisdom this summer?

The Beginning of Everything Important

Read these key verses of the Book of Proverbs:

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. (NIV)

Proverbs 9:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (NIV)

[Q] How would you describe the fear of the Lord? How is it different than fear of an enemy?

Read and discuss this quote:

...the fear of the Lord described in Proverbs 1:7 is the fear of a converted person, a reverent love that understands God's grace toward the sinner who trusts Christ and who wants to do what is pleasing to the Lord.

This kind of fear recognizes the Lord's character and His holy love.

C.S. Lewis' illustration of this love in *The Problem of Pain* helps us understand the kind of fear we should have toward our God. His love is **not**

"a senile benevolence that drowsily wishes you to be happy in your own way, nor the cold philanthropy of a conscientious magistrate, nor the care of a host who feels responsible for the comfort of his guests."

Instead, it is "the consuming Fire Himself, the Love that made the worlds, persistent as the artist's love for his work and despotic as a man's love for a dog, provident and venerable as a father's love for a child, jealous, inexorable, exacting as love between the sexes." (From R. C. Sproul at ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/fear-lord/)

[Q] How does recognizing *the Lord's character and His holy love* help produce the right kind of fear of the Lord?

Apply:

[Q] How can you increase your love for the Lord's character and better understand His holy love?

Jesus

[Q] What do you learn about wisdom and knowledge from the following passages?

Colossians 2:2-3

1 Corinthians 1:23-25

[Q] What would you say to someone who pursues wisdom and knowledge without Jesus? Why?

Pray

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.

James 1:5 NLT

Optional: Read more about the origin and fruit of wisdom in James 3:13-17.