

Charted Waters

June 7, 2020

Proverbs 1:7-19

As we begin a new study in the book of Proverbs, two paths are placed before us. One is the path of wisdom, the other is the path of fools. The author, Solomon, encourages us to walk in the path of wisdom. Jesus said it this way, *“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.”* Matthew 7:13

As we think of these two paths, we are reminded of two trees in the Garden of Eden. One tree opened the door to eternal life, the other led to death and destruction. There have always been only two paths a person can follow. There are no other options.

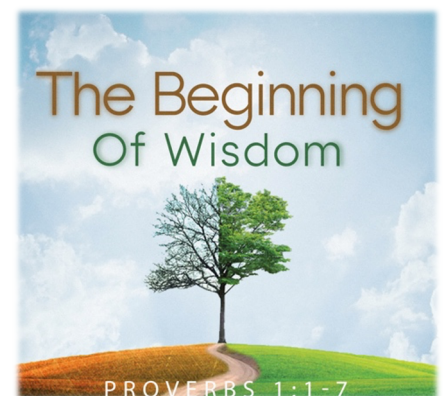
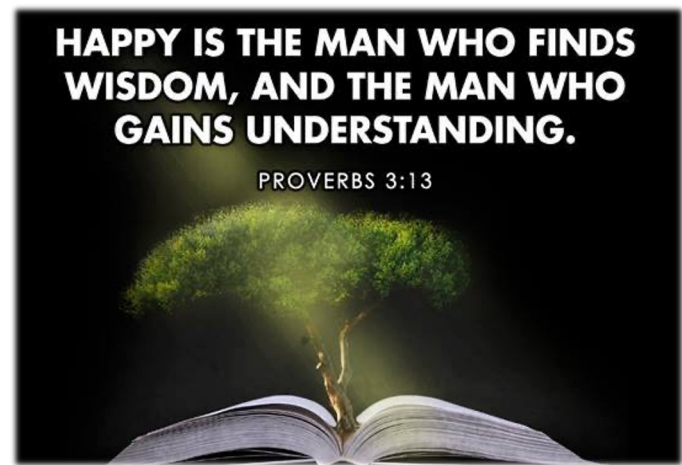
Proverbs 1:7 functions as a sort of “thesis statement” for the rest of Proverbs, the unifying principle that binds together the various sayings, teachings, and aphorisms found in this diverse and unique book. It says, *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*

Sadly, fools often consider their rebellion to be a mark of wisdom. As far back as the serpent’s deception of Eve in the Garden, Satan has been tempting humanity to reject God’s word. So, is there hope for fools like us? The answer is, “Yes.” In our fallen condition, our instinct is to follow our desires and impulses. But wisdom urges us to follow Christ. He is the wise voice that pleads with us to surrender in faith and follow Him in obedience. [excerpts from Travis Biller and Joshua Sharp]

Starting Point (Proverbs 1:7) (see also Prov. 1:1-6)

- Solomon, being a wise king, composed 3000 proverbs during his reign.
 - This book compiles these proverbs in what is known as wisdom literature of the Bible.
 - Verses 2-6 tell us the purpose of the proverbs in Solomon’s own hand.
 - Verse 7 is the key to understanding the source of all wisdom:
 - ***“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge”***
 - In teaching your children how to make decisions, there is a starting point. Likewise, wisdom has a starting point, it begins with a relationship with the Lord.
 - Wisdom comes from the Lord – He uses our years of experience to show us His way.
 - **Fearing the Lord** means respecting Him. In fact, respecting the Lord is wisdom itself.
 - Solomon encouraged us to take our walk with the Lord seriously.
 - By contrast, fools have no use for God. They don’t cherish the wisdom He can give.
 - This leaves fools unprepared to face daily challenges and the temptations of Satan.
 - In this one simple (and powerful verse) Solomon posits there are but two paths – to be wise, or to be foolish.
 - To fear the Lord, or to reject the Lord.
- **Why would one choose to reject the wisdom of the Lord?**
- **What does the world need to do to become wise?**

*Wise Believers see things God’s way
so they can do things His way.*



Path of Obedience (Proverbs 1:8-9)

- Solomon began to instruct His own son.
 - Parents take note of this important responsibility.
- By instructing his son to **hear**, Solomon pointed to a key discipline for growing in God’s wisdom.
 - To hear (or listen) is a skill – one must pay attention, absorb, interpret, and apply what is being said.
- **“hear the instruction of the father, and forsake not the law of thy mother”**
 - The father’s and mother’s instruction is crucial to a child’s development.
 - Godly information leads not only to knowledge but to transformation.
- Obedience results in reward. Ornament of grace and chains about thy neck (necklace).
 - Ornaments were worn to show something significant had been accomplished.
 - The ornament of grace shows God would be gracious to the one who lived in wisdom.
 - Gold pendants (Gen 41:42) indicates God’s wisdom yielded a life of true honor.
- These verses show how important it is for parents to provide Godly instruction.

➤ **Why does God’s grace get poured out on one who seeks His wisdom?**

Resist Sin (Proverbs 1:10-14)

- Solomon’s instruction to his son includes avoiding the temptation to join a bad group.
 - He describes gang members as sinners.
 - They had rejected God’s ways and had embraced a life aimed at pleasing themselves.
- Solomon wanted his son to decide in advance to reject the gang’s invitation to join.
- To help his son decide, Solomon describes the gang’s ways in vivid detail.
 - Killing and innocent person for fun – swallow him up in the grave.
 - Steal his possessions and fill their houses with loot. All members have a share.
- The temptation to belong to a group is strong – excitement and adventure.
 - They could be rich without having to work or to wait.
- Remember, there are only two paths. One leads to wisdom, the other to fools.
- We must be prepared to face the daily challenges and temptations before they occur.

➤ **Have you helped others choose a wise path?**

Sin’s Results (Proverbs 1:15-19)

- Solomon made sure his son knew not to begin on the foolish path:
 - **“refrain thy foot from their path”**
 - Getting on their road would start with one step. Solomon said never take the first step.
- The gang’s greed would lead to them forfeiting their lives. Trapped in their own snare.
- Greed has plagued people since the earliest time. But dishonest profit destroys greedy people.
 - Ignoring God’s wisdom still put’s a person’s life in jeopardy. For that reason, mature Christians seek His wisdom through His Word.

➤ **What other temptations should you warn others to avoid?**

Biblical Truth: God’s Word warns us of the consequences of foolish choices.

Fear of The Lord

The expression ‘fear of the Lord’ represents far more than an emotion. It is a deep sense of awe, worship, and humble submission to the one, true God. It describes a foundational understanding about life’s purpose and the manner in which we are to conduct ourselves in life. The phrase acknowledges our accountability to Him for the ways we think, speak and act each day.

