

Proverbs Week #76 (8:12-14)

I, wisdom, live with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; I hate arrogant pride and the evil way and perverse utterances. Counsel and sound wisdom belong to me; I possess understanding and might. Proverbs 8:12-14

This section of Proverbs defines Wisdom's companions (who She dwells with), what She is, and what She possesses. We are told that to fear the LORD is to hate evil and this is expanded to include pride, an evil way, and perverse speech.

When we read scripture that tells us things that God hates it should make us pause and consider our lives. Before we consider others we know who might be proud or say things that are perverse, we should stop and examine our own lives. We are told elsewhere in scripture that we should "...abhor what is evil; cling to what is good." That verse begins with "Let love be without hypocrisy..." (Rom 12:9). In our pursuit of Wisdom we must learn what it means to fear God, to love sincerely, and be repulsed by those things that are displeasing to God. In this regard, we can come to God for wisdom knowing that He provides counsel and His wisdom is sound.

A more literal translation of verse 14 would be "I *am* understanding" and to me is counsel, sound wisdom (success or a good result), and might (from the root גבר as a mighty man or one skilled in battle). To become wise is to become a disciple of Wisdom. We look to God to teach us what it means to be mature members of His family.

Action Items – Learn, discern, receive, impart:

Learn – Remember that to be wise we must also learn what it means to be humble. As we read in James 4:6 "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." We should not forget this. The lessons that God wants us to learn are for all times. A moment of pride can have devastating affects.

Discern – What are the signs of pride in your life? What clues or symptoms might indicate that you are suffering from this deadly sin? I would suggest that you check the level of thankfulness in your soul to see if your glass is empty or full. I would also look to yourself and check your level of anxiety and fearfulness. Are you trusting in your own abilities or seeking God for His provisions?

Receive – Are you hearing what God is saying in the scriptures we are discussing? Are you living your day-to-day life with an awareness of how God is disciplining you and teaching you?

Impart – Has God given you grace and enabled you to experience success, as you trust in Him? Are you sharing this praise with those whom God has put in your life? The Psalmist sings, "My soul will make its boast in the LORD; The humble will hear it and rejoice." (Psalm 34:2) Not everyone is willing to listen to what God is doing in your life, but pray that God can help you to be wise and help others to be wise as well.

Suggested Activities for families:

As a carryover from last week, if you have not already done so, memorize Proverbs 1:2-4, post it on note cards or print the verses from a computer and place it in strategic areas of your home – in the kitchen, on the bathroom mirror, in children's play areas, or any other prominent place. Be creative and consider using clip art or other artwork to illustrate or teach these four concepts and to help get more of the family involved.