

Proverbs – A Study of Some Key Passages

Week 6 – Chapters 30-31: Wisdom's Conclusion

Passages in blue: Scripture quotations taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. lockman.org

Opening Prayer: Lord, grant us humility, wisdom, and faithful service as we live before You. Amen. (Week 5 Memory Verse: Proverbs 27:17)

Key Passage #1 – Humility Before God:

Proverbs 30:5 “Every word of God is pure [refined, tested]; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.”

Teaching:

- Human wisdom is limited.
- God's Word is perfect and trustworthy.
- Pure: God's words have been tested and found reliable. Just as precious metal is refined and proven pure, God's promises, commands, and teachings can be trusted because they are free from error and deception.
- Shield: God is a faithful defender and source of safety amid life's challenges.

Discussion:

1. Why is God's Word more trustworthy than human opinion?
2. How does Scripture protect believers?
3. What does it mean to take refuge in God?

Key Passage #2 – Give Me Neither Poverty nor Riches:

Proverbs 30:8–9 “Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion, That I not be full and deny You and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or that I not be in want and steal, And profane the name of my God.”

Teaching:

- Agur asks God for something unusual: not wealth, but enough. He recognizes spiritual dangers at both extremes.
 - Riches can tempt a person toward self-sufficiency.

- Poverty can tempt a person toward dishonesty and stealing.

His greater concern is **not** his standard of living **but** his relationship with God and the honor of God's name.

- This is a beautiful prayer for contentment and daily dependence upon God.

Discussion:

- What does “the food that is my portion” teach us about contentment?
- How is this prayer like “Give us this day our daily bread”?

Law and Gospel:

- Law: Our sinful nature is easily tempted either to trust in possessions when we have plenty or to distrust God when we lack what we want.
- Gospel: Our heavenly Father knows our needs and faithfully provides for us. Above all, He has given us the greatest treasure – forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life through Christ.

Application: Rather than praying primarily for more, we can pray: “Lord, give me what You know I need, keep me content with Your provision, and never let material things draw my heart away from You.”

Key Passage #3 – A Life of Godly Character:

Proverbs 31:10 “An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.”

Teaching:

- The Proverbs 31 woman demonstrates faith, diligence, compassion, and wisdom.
- Those qualities are valuable for all Christians.

Discussion: What step could you take *beginning today* to increase your faith or diligence or compassion or wisdom?

Faith — Begin with the fear of the LORD. Set aside time today for God's Word and prayer. Ask, "What does God say about this?" before making decisions. Remember that biblical faith grows as God works through His Word (Romans 10:17). Today: Read a portion of Scripture slowly, identify one promise of God, and consciously entrust one worry or decision to Him.

Diligence — Do the next responsibility faithfully. The woman of Proverbs 31 "works with her hands in delight" (v. 13), rises to meet her responsibilities (v. 15), and "does not eat the bread of idleness" (v. 27). Today: Identify one responsibility you have been postponing and finish it. Don't wait until you feel diligent; practice diligence through action.

Compassion — Notice someone else's need and act. Verse 20 says, "She extends her hand to the poor, and she stretches out her hands to the needy." Compassion is more than feeling sympathy; it moves toward the person who needs help. Today: Think of one person who is lonely, struggling, grieving, financially burdened, or simply needs encouragement. Call, visit, help, give, or pray with that person.

Wisdom — Learn God's truth and use it lovingly. Verse 26 says, "She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." Biblical wisdom is knowing God's truth and applying it properly to everyday life. Today: Before speaking in an important conversation, ask: "Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind? Does it reflect God's wisdom?"

Key Passage #4 – The Highest Praise:

Proverbs 31:30 "Charm [a quality that attracts people] is deceitful [disappointing, false] and beauty is vain [temporary – like a vapor or a breath], **But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.**"

Teaching:

- Outward appearance fades.
- Faith endures.
- The fear of the Lord remains the central theme from beginning to end.

- Males and females should, first and foremost, be searching for a potential spouse who fears the LORD.

Law and Gospel:

- Law: We often seek worldly success and outward approval – things that attract others but will ultimately result in disappointment.
- Gospel: Christ gives us His righteousness and teaches us true wisdom – things that will bless us now and forevermore!

Memory Verse:

Proverbs 31:30 "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised."

Conclusion for the Study:

1 Corinthians 1:30 "...it is due to Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption."

- The ultimate lesson of Proverbs is not merely, "Be wiser."
- Rather, Proverbs continually exposes our foolishness and drives us to Christ, who is God's wisdom incarnate.
- Through faith in Him we receive ♦forgiveness, ♦eternal life, and ♦the wisdom that comes from fearing, loving, and trusting God above all things.

Let's Review the Six Memory Verses – realizing they provide an excellent summary of the book's major themes:

- Trusting God: Proverbs 3:5–6
- Guarding the heart: Proverbs 4:23
- Controlling the tongue: Proverbs 15:1
- Practicing humility: Proverbs 16:18
- Growing through godly relationships: Proverbs 27:17
- Fearing the Lord: Proverbs 31:30

Application: Choose at least three of the six memory verses to ♦know them, ♦continue to review them, and ♦keep applying them.