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Proverbs

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”*

~ Proverbs 9:10

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How to Use This Study Guide

Bible study is not just learning about God; it is about knowing God and growing in your relationship with Him. When you sit down to study, begin with prayer. Before reading the lesson and answering the questions, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His truth to you. You may find it helpful to have a few study aids such as a dictionary, a concordance, and more than one translation of the Bible. You may also find the following online resources helpful:

BibleGateway.com BlueLetterBible.org WebstersDictionary1828.com

Note: The New King James Version (NKJV) was used for this Study Guide, with consideration of the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the Amplified Bible (AMP), and the New Living Translation (NLT).

As you answer the questions, keep in mind that *there are no right or wrong answers*. If you do not understand something, or you cannot answer a question, bring it to your group for discussion. This is a benefit of the small group setting.

Near the end of the study questions, there is a "Growing Stronger" section. This is an important and personal part of the study. As you answer the questions in this section, reflect on how you can apply the lesson personally by asking the following questions: What does this mean for my life? Is there something I can start doing? Is there something I need to stop doing?

Each lesson ends with a "Final Thoughts" section. Consider using a journal to write your thoughts and insights as you answer the questions and reflect on the lesson you completed. Your journal is also a good place to write prayers to God in response to what He reveals to you in His Word.

*"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,
for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
~ 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

Wisdom and Folly

Perhaps you have heard of the faith of Abraham, the courage of Elijah, and the patience of Job. A study of the book of Proverbs will help you begin to use the Wisdom of Solomon. The book of Proverbs is not only wise, relevant, and timely - it is convicting and always up-to-date. Proverbs is probably the most practical book in the Bible. In this study, you will learn how to take the practical wisdom of Solomon and begin to work it into your heart and life. Digging deeply into the treasures of Proverbs will provide working solutions to your problems, protection from the enemy, and a light for your path.

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Wisdom

2. Ecclesiastes 10:10 (NASB) says, "Wisdom has the advantage of giving success." What do the following verses tell us about wisdom?

Proverbs 2:6-7

Daniel 2:20

3. Read Proverbs 14:1. What does the "wise woman" do?

According to Proverbs 24:3, how does a wise woman build her house?

4. There are many proverbs contrasting a wise person and a fool. What do we learn about this in the following verses?

Proverbs 12:15

Proverbs 14:16

Proverbs 29:11

*"Never mistake knowledge for wisdom.
One helps you make a living; the other helps you make a life."*

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

5. On any given day, we are faced with multiple decisions. What do the following verses exhort you to do?

Proverbs 3:5-7

James 1:5

6. Look up the following verses. What does the Bible say about worldly wisdom and true godly wisdom?

I Corinthians 3:19

James 3:17

"A smart person knows what to say; a wise person knows how to say it."

~ Anonymous

7. As we continue with our study in Proverbs, let's take a moment and read Paul's awesome prayer in Colossians 1:9-12.

What did he pray for? (verse 9)

Why did he pray for it? (verse 10)

What outcome was he looking for? (verses 11,12)

Growing Stronger...

The Book of Proverbs is a topical collection of observations about how life works rather than a historical book. The point of a proverb, therefore, is to get rightly related to reality through hard thinking and sustained reflection. Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. He had specifically asked God for wisdom which God graciously granted. This resulted in people coming from foreign lands to hear him speak. Read the following Proverbs and record the information that we can glean about wisdom from Solomon.

Proverbs 3:35

Proverbs 11:2

Proverbs 19:8

Ecclesiastes 2:13

Ecclesiastes 10:10

Final Thoughts...

Proverbs 31:26 (NASB) is a beautiful description of a godly woman: "She opens her mouth in wisdom and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." Take a moment and ask the Lord to give you His wisdom as you study the book of Proverbs this year. Write your prayer here:

The Fear of the LORD

Throughout the Bible, God tells His people to not be afraid; to “fear not” because He is with them. Yet also throughout Scripture, God’s people are exhorted to “fear the LORD.” The fear of the LORD is to be in awe and wonder, to reverence and respect the LORD. The more we fear Him, the more we will obey Him. One cannot have a healthy relationship with God without the reverential fear of the LORD.

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Fear

2. Read Proverbs 2:1-5. What advice is given in order to “understand the fear of the LORD”?

3. What do the following verses reveal about the fear of the LORD?

Psalm 19:9

Proverbs 1:7

Proverbs 8:13

Proverbs 16:6

Proverbs 22:4

4. The Bible is God's letter to us; it is a manual of how we are to walk through this Christian life. Read Ecclesiastes 12:9-13. According to verse 13, what two things are we to conclude?

5. The Bible is full of God's promises to His people. What do the following verses promise us if we fear the LORD?

Proverbs 10:27 AMP

Proverbs 14:26-27

Proverbs 19:23

6. Read Acts 2:40-45. What effect did the fear of the LORD have on the early church believers?

Do you fear the LORD? If so, what effect does the fear of the LORD have on you?

7. As Christians, we are commanded to fear the LORD. Read Proverbs 1:28-29. What happens when you do **not** fear the LORD?

"The remarkable thing about God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else."

~ Oswald Chambers

Growing Stronger...

To truly fear the LORD, you must allow Him to be the Lord of your life. Job was a man the LORD described as "blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil" (Job 1:1). Job suffered tremendous trials losing almost everything he had, and yet, Job continued to fear the LORD. Prayerfully read the account of Job in Job 1:6-22.

According to verse 8, because Job feared the LORD, what did he do?

According to verse 20, what was Job's reaction to losing everything?

Recall a trial that you have walked through. How did your reactions reveal your fear of the LORD?

Final Thoughts...

Fearing the LORD is not a one-time thing: it is a moment-by-moment decision to choose to fear Him, to allow Him to be the Lord of your life. To fear the LORD is to aim to live our lives pleasing Him and refraining from sin. Do you refrain from sin because you hate the consequences? Or do you refrain from sin out of a distaste for sin because it grieves and offends God? Take a few minutes to pray and seek the Lord. Ask Him to reveal the true motives of your heart. Ask Him to give you a genuine, reverential fear of Him.

The Heart

The heart of man, according to the Bible, refers to the center of a person's being. It is the place where emotions and desires begin, encompassing our thoughts, emotions, and will. It is seen as the source of one's spiritual condition and moral choices, reflecting a relationship with God in our preference toward good or evil.

1. The Bible warns us about the deceitfulness of the human heart. What can we learn about the natural heart of man from the following verses?

Genesis 6:5

Jeremiah 17:9-10

Mark 7:21-23

"The fact that our hearts yearn for something earth can't supply is proof that heaven must be our home." ~ C.S. Lewis

2. What did Jesus say about "the hearts of this people" in Matthew 13:15?

What promise did He offer those who turn toward Him to hear and understand?

3. According to Proverbs 4:23, why are we to watch over our hearts with all diligence?

Explain what this means to you.

4. There are many heart conditions listed in the book of Proverbs. What can we learn about these conditions in the following verses?

The Proud Heart:

Proverbs 16:5

Proverbs 18:12

The Foolish Heart:

Proverbs 19:3

Proverbs 28:26

The Joyful Heart:

Proverbs 15:13,15

Proverbs 17:22

The Wise Heart:

Proverbs 10:8

Proverbs 16:23

5. Read Proverbs 3:1-4. What will we receive if we let our heart keep His commands?

6. How can we find favor with God and man?

Growing Stronger...

In Jeremiah 24:7 the LORD said, "I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart." As we surrender to God's plan and return to Him with our whole heart, what does He promise us?

Jeremiah 29:11-13

Romans 10:9-11

Hebrews 8:10,12

Final Thoughts...

The Bible mentions the heart almost a thousand times. It is the very core of our being. In Psalm 51:10 David cried, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." As you come before the Lord, prayerfully ask Him to give you new ideas, new wisdom, and new desires. Ask Him to give you a willing heart in the areas where you may be struggling.

*"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths."*

~ Proverbs 3:5-6

The Mind

Our minds are incredibly powerful. Matthew 15:18-19 indicates that our minds are connected to our heart. Out of our hearts come thoughts, good and evil, that influence our actions and shape our relationship with God and others. What we feed our minds is incredibly important for spiritual health, whether we will bear good or bad fruit in our lives. What we feed our minds will be what grows in our lives. There is power in right thinking.

1. Read the following verses and summarize or rewrite them in your own words.

Proverbs 4:23

Luke 6:45

2. Read Romans 8:5-8 and record what it says about being carnally minded.

What does it say about being spiritually minded?

3. Read Proverbs 15:26 and record what is revealed.

4. We have a tendency to think that our thoughts are secret unless we reveal them. However, our thoughts, the best and worst of them, are completely known. What do the following verses reveal about our thoughts?

Psalms 94:11

Isaiah 66:18

Matthew 9:4

Hebrews 4:12

5. It has been said that if we think it, we believe it. If we do not guard our minds, we can become overwhelmed with depression, worry, fear, and contention. Our thoughts can cause us to sin. Read Philippians 4:8-9 and record what you learn.

What helps you to meditate or dwell on "these things" in your day-to-day life?

6. Look up 1 Peter 1:13 and rewrite it in your own words.
7. Our muscles need to be exercised to be strengthened. How do we strengthen our thought life?
8. Can you recall a time when you struggled in the battlefield of your mind? What did you do to pull yourself out of it?
9. According to Colossians 3:2, what are we to "set our minds" on?

Explain what this means to you.

What does Proverbs 16:3 add to this?

10. Read Romans 12:2. Why do we need to renew our minds?

"I've many a cross to take up now, and many left behind; but present troubles move me not, nor shake my quiet mind. And what may be tomorrow's cross I never seek to find; my Father says, 'Leave that to Me and keep a quiet mind.'"

~ Anonymous

11. In our sinful human state, we need Jesus every second of each day. We are to renew our minds daily to align with God's will. Being His, what do 1 Corinthians 2:16 and Philippians 2:5 say that we have?

Using your own words, complete the following: Because I have the mind of Christ I...

Growing Stronger...

In the Garden of Eden, Satan deceived Eve with a simple statement, "You won't die!" (Genesis 3:4 NLT) Those words, that lie, became a thought that sowed doubt and grew into an action of disobedience against God. All it takes is one thought. We should be seeking God every day and renewing our minds with His word. 2 Corinthians 10:5 instructs us to bring every thought captive. Explain how you can practically live this out.

Final Thoughts...

Proverbs 23:7 says, "as he thinks in his heart, so is he." Our thoughts directly affect our living. We can get stuck in the wrong thought life that can create unwanted patterns. No matter how hard it can feel, pushing past our negative thinking is powerful. We can overcome the pit of where we have put ourselves. Our thoughts are not secret. God knows every single one. When we commit to making our thoughts align with His and practice bringing our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ, we can walk in victory. Our prayer should be that our thoughts are silenced so we can hear His voice. Prayerfully read Psalm 139 and thank God today for His knowledge of you.

"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You,
because he trusts in You." ~ Isaiah 26:3

The Tongue

The power of our words in our daily lives cannot be underestimated. Each word carries weight which can either build up or tear down. Like a fire, our words can be either constructive or destructive based on how they are controlled. A tongue under the control of the Holy Spirit can speak life and truth into the world and transfer the wisdom of God to the next generation. But like a fire burning out of control, our tongues can also do great damage.

1. Read James 3:5-10. What is the tongue compared to in these verses?

What kind of damage can it do?

What do we learn about the untamed tongue in verses 8-10?

2. Proverbs is God's "Book of Wisdom" written to help us navigate real life situations. Ecclesiastes 10:10 (NASB) says, "Wisdom has the advantage of giving success." What wisdom can you glean from the following verses on the tongue?

Proverbs 10:19

Proverbs 13:3

Proverbs 18:7

Proverbs 21:23

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

~ Mother Theresa

3. In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul exhorted Timothy to be an example in several things, including speech. List the ways that you can be an example:

In speech -

In conduct -

In love -

In faith -

In purity -

4. Read Colossians 4:6. What do you think it means to "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt"?

5. As you look up the following Proverbs, record the characteristics that reveal the tongue of the wise?

Proverbs 12:18

Proverbs 15:2

Proverbs 16:23

6. Proverbs 25:11 is a beautiful word picture that reveals the beauty of choosing the right words. What do you think the author meant by this word picture?

7. As we live to please the Lord, what two things does Psalm 19:14 tell us we need to be mindful of and why?

Growing Stronger...

Words are a unique and powerful gift from God. Our words do more than convey information; they have an impact on people. They can be filled with hate or love, bitterness or blessing, complaining or encouragement. When we become Christians, there is an expectancy that a change of speech will follow. Knowing this, what are we to do when we have been convicted by something we thoughtlessly uttered?

Prayerfully Read Proverbs 6:2-4

What does it mean to humble yourself?

What does it mean to save/deliver yourself?

According to verse 4, how quickly should we do this?

Final thoughts...

Christians are those whose hearts have been changed by the power of God. Because we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we have the power to make conscious choices to honor God with our tongues even in difficult situations. It has been said that we should THINK before we speak:

- Is it **T** rue?
- Is it **H** elpful?
- Is it **I** nspiring?
- Is it **N** ecessary?
- Is it **K** ind?

*"The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks justice.
The Law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slip." ~ Psalm 37:30-31 NASB*

Anger and Strife

When we read about anger in the Bible, we see that God recognizes anger as a part of our human experience. It is a normal response that is warranted in the face of injustice and evil in the world. God experiences righteous anger "every day" (Psalm 7:11). We also see that Jesus' anger led to a holy response towards the hypocrisy of His day. (John 2:13-17) When anger rises within us, it signals that something is not right. If we allow anger to control us, we can destroy relationships and hurt others. However, if we learn to control our anger, it can be an opportunity for resolution and spiritual growth, drawing us closer to the heart of God.

1. Read the following Proverbs and describe the difference between a wise person and someone controlled by their anger:

Proverbs 16:32

Proverbs 19:11

Proverbs 29:11

2. Proverbs 27:19 (ESV) says, "As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects the man." Anger and our response to it reveals our spiritual maturity and what truly resides in our hearts. A wise woman may experience conflict or injustice that evokes anger, but she takes the time to examine the situation and seeks God's wisdom before responding. Read Ephesians 4:22-31 and answer the following questions.

Since God tells us to be angry without sinning (verse 26), it is possible. How can we do this? (verses 22-24)

How are we to renew our minds? (verse 31)

When should we deal with anger and why? (verses 26-27)

*"It is only our bad temper we put down to being tired or worried or hungry;
we put our good temper down to ourselves."*

~ C.S. Lewis

3. Anger itself is not a sin but is an emotion. However, anger can be born out of sin or lead us to sin. It is essential to examine its root cause. Recall a time you experienced anger. Were you able to feel angry at the situation and still love the other person(s) involved?

Whether your answer is yes or no, what do you think was the root cause of your anger?

4. Read James 1:19-20. What three things did James instruct believers to do and why?

How do these commands work together to keep anger from controlling us?

5. According to Proverbs 15:18 and 29:22, what is the result of someone who is controlled by human anger?

6. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:
Strife

What insight about strife do you glean from the following Proverbs?

Proverbs 10:12

Proverbs 13:10

Proverbs 28:25

7. Several verses remind us to be "slow to anger". We aren't to explode in anger, but we also aren't to suppress it. Instead, being slow to anger allows us time to invite God into the situation, hear Him, and respond accordingly. Read the following verses and record what God promises when we come to Him for help.

Proverbs 3:6

Hebrews 4:16

James 1:5

8. How does it bring you comfort to know that no matter the situation, God is able and willing to help you choose His way?

One of His ways is revealed in Proverbs 15:1a. Write it here.

9. The next time you experience anger, how will you handle it God's way?

Growing Stronger...

Remembering anger is a normal emotion can lift a heavy burden from our shoulders. God laid out exactly what to do when we experience anger and promises to give us grace and mercy in times of need (Hebrews 4:16). However, we can also experience an overreaction of anger in our lives that warrants a deeper examination of our hearts. The Bible gives us several reasons for deep-seated anger including pride, jealousy, bitterness, and unforgiveness. When we choose to let these roots grow in our hearts, we find ourselves disproportionately reacting in anger towards people and situations. According to 1 John 1:9, what is the first step in dealing with any of these sinful roots in our hearts?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. This passage is a perfect example of how God deals with us because He is love. How does this description of God's love help you choose to love others despite past hurts?

Final Thoughts...

1 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV) says, "...Love is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs." Perhaps it is time to let go of any "record of wrongs" you may be holding on to. Regardless of its cause, if you have wounds or hurts that need healing, ask the Lord to begin the healing process in you. Don't be discouraged if the healing takes time. God is faithful so we can be confident that "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

Wealth and Poverty

Proverbs has much to say about wealth and poverty. Its author, King Solomon, asked God for “an understanding heart to judge Your people that I may be able to discern between good and evil” (1 Kings 3:9). God gave Solomon “a wise and understanding heart” and riches and honor. Through wisdom, Solomon’s wealth increased; he also learned difficult lessons from placing hope in worldly resources and pleasures. The Bible speaks about the benefits of generosity, the value of gaining wealth honestly, and the dangers of poverty and excessive wealth (see Proverbs 30:8-9). Money is a powerful tool: it is useful and good when our hearts are aligned with God, and a snare when our hearts are under its control.

1. Read 1 Chronicles 29:11-12. What belongs to the LORD?

From whom do riches and honor come?

2. What does Deuteronomy 8:18 call us to remember?

Why is this important?

Since God owns everything, we are to be faithful stewards of the resources He gives us. What does our attitude and use of our resources reveal about our spiritual maturity?

3. Read Luke 16:10-12. What do we learn about faithfulness and trust?

4. In your own words explain, “You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Luke 16:13)

What effect does money have on our spiritual lives?

Are only the wealthy in danger of serving the god of money? Explain your answer.

"The world asks, 'What does a man own?' Christ asks, 'How does he use it?'"

~ Andrew Murray

5. Money is a resource we all use and need. The Bible is clear that our character and how we accumulate wealth is important. What wisdom do the following verses give us about those who gain wealth and those who find poverty?

Proverbs 10:4

Proverbs 11:18

Proverbs 13:11

6. 1 Timothy 6:10 states, "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil." Whether we have little or much, it emphasizes that our relationship with money can be a potential problem—specifically, where our affection and trust lie. What can we learn about the dangers of placing our security in wealth from the following verses?

Proverbs 11:4

Proverbs 11:28

Ecclesiastes 5:10

1 Timothy 6:10

7. The world encourages us to gain wealth even at the expense of others and to use that wealth for our gain and pleasure. However, the kingdom of God operates in a completely different way. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 and answer the following questions.

What spiritual principles does Paul share about reaping and sowing? (verse 6)

How are we to give? (verse 7)

What blessings are promised? (verses 8-11)

8. Proverbs 11:24-26 highlights the importance of generosity and its benefits. Compare the one who gives to the one who withholds.

Growing Stronger...

Our past experiences with money can shape our relationship with wealth. Regardless of our experiences, the Bible gives clear instructions on how we are to manage our finances. While God gives wisdom on how to be good stewards, we are not meant to be burdened with the heavy load of relying on ourselves in the area of finances. Read what Jesus says about meeting our needs in Matthew 6:31-33.

What are we not to do?

What does our heavenly Father know?

Because our Father in heaven knows our needs, what does Jesus instruct us to do?

Recall and share a time when God met your needs.

Final Thoughts...

Learning to be a good steward takes time and application. The ultimate goal is that we learn to work in partnership with God. It's another opportunity to grow in our relationship with Him! Money is meant to be a tool that God can use in our lives to bring us closer to Him, show His faithfulness, and bless others. By continually coming to Him in humility, we can learn to be dependable women who can be trusted with little or with much. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any area in your finances that you need to surrender. Confess your worries and fears; be honest if there's an area that requires repentance. God loves to forgive and gives wisdom generously when we ask Him. (see James 1:5) If there's an area you know needs change, prayerfully write out an action plan.

Pride and Humility

A proverb is a poetic art form that instills wisdom as you wrestle with it. Often two adjoining phrases or sentences will modify or expand on each other creating a vivid image for better understanding. "A person's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor" (Proverbs 29:23 NASB). Pride can often stand in the way of our relationship with God and others, but together we can learn how to let go of pride, walk in humility, and build healthy life-giving relationships.

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Pride

Humility

2. What does 1 Peter 5:5 mean when it instructs you to "clothe yourself with humility"?

What vital truth about God is revealed in this verse?

3. Read 2 Chronicles 7:14. What four things does God ask us to do so that He can bring healing?

What three things will He do if we obey?

4. Understanding how God views pride is crucial for us as believers. God sees pride as an obstacle that can separate us from His love and from others. What can you learn from the following Proverbs about being prideful?

Proverbs 8:13

Proverbs 11:2

Proverbs 16:18-19

5. What was the cry of the psalmist's heart concerning pride in Psalm 36:11?

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is just thinking of yourself less."

~ Anonymous

6. God's Word makes it very clear that humility is a character trait that we must strive to incorporate into our daily lives. We are reminded to never let pride overshadow our need for divine guidance and wisdom. According to the following Proverbs, what promises are ours as we walk in humility?

Proverbs 11:2

Proverbs 13:10

Proverbs 15:33

Proverbs 22:4

Proverbs 29:23

Growing Stronger...

Humility and pride are two contrasting attributes that shape our character and behavior. Humility fosters empathy, growth, and harmonious relationships while pride can hinder personal development and create conflicts. Unlike the obvious sins of stealing or lying, pride is a sneaky thing; we may not even realize how prideful we have become.

Read Romans 12:1-3. How does God's grace play a part in your estimation of yourself?

What warning is given in these verses?

According to Paul, how are we to think about ourselves?

Final Thoughts...

"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves." - Philippians 2:3 NASB

To build strong healthy relationships that will bless our homes, churches, and communities, we must first love God and recognize our own need for God's grace and mercy. As we understand this, it will produce a healthy humility in our interactions with those around us and bring God glory. Thank God for His mercy and grace. Ask Him to give you a spirit of humility.

*"And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?" ~ Micah 6:8 NASB*

Fear and Anxiety

Our fear puts a spotlight on our lack and not on God's strength. When we choose to fear, we direct our focus on our false sense of control. We put our attention on self and not on the strength of God and His promises. Only God can guide us and direct our steps. Only God is our strength. He promises to never leave us or forsake us. Lean on Him and surrender your fears and anxieties to God, the true strength of our today and tomorrows.

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Fear

Anxiety

2. According to Proverbs 12:25, what does anxiety produce?

"Fear arises when we imagine that everything depends on us."

~ Elisabeth Elliot

3. What are some things that may cause you to fear today?
4. Read Matthew 6:25-34. Record the ways that God takes care of His creation.

What are we not to worry about and why?

5. Look up the following verses and record what God has given us to replace our fear and anxiety?

Proverbs 1:33

Proverbs 29:25

2 Timothy 1:7

6. We are sinners living in a fallen world. We are not guaranteed a life without fear or anxiety. We will have trials and difficulties. What does 1 Peter 5:7 tell us to do and why?

7. When we are given opportunities to trust and obey God, but we allow fear to dominate, we are acting as though we, rather than our Creator, have control over our lives. What does James 1:2-4 say?

8. We need to trust God, seek His peace, and know His presence. He is a loving Father who holds us in the very palm of His hand. He cares for us. What do the following verses say about God's love and strength when we are faced with fear and anxiety?

Psalm 34:4

Isaiah 41:10

Jeremiah 17:7-8

9. Recall a time when fear and anxiety crept into your life. How did you get through it?

How would you have handled it differently?

Growing Stronger...

Fear and anxiety can break into our day unexpectedly. Our best defense is to lean on the Lord and ask for His strength to see us through. We need to arm ourselves with His word. Record the following verses and choose at least one to help when fear tries to creep in. Write it out on a 3x5 card to post on your mirror, wall, and/or to keep in your pocket. When you dwell on God's word, He will surely calm your spirit and see you through with His strength.

Psalm 27:1

John 14:27

John 16:33

Philippians 4:6-7

Final Thoughts...

God has given His word to strengthen us. For deeper encouragement, read Isaiah 43. Write in your journal or note your favorite sections that strengthen you as you read it.

Fear and anxiety can become overwhelming when we hold it in. Bring your worries and troubles to the light. Pray, journal, and tell a trusted friend. Galatians 6:2 tells us to bear one another's burdens. If you are struggling, find a sister in Christ who will help hold your arms up in surrender to God. He is so faithful to meet you there and give you His peace.

Truth and Lies

God is described as the Ultimate Truth. When we walk in truthfulness, we mirror who He is. When others see us walking in truth, they catch a glimpse of God. The Bible teaches that lying is not just a minor offense; it can lead to a chain of serious consequences that cause division and affect our relationship with God and with others. As members of the body of Christ, we are called to uphold truth in all of our relationships. This will result in a healthy community of trust and love.

1. According to Ephesians 4:25, what are we to "put off" or lay aside?

What are we to "put on" or do?

Why are we called to do these things?

2. God takes a strong stance against deceitful behavior. Therefore, honesty is vital to maintain a close relationship with Him. Why is truth so important?

Psalm 101:7

Psalm 145:18

Proverbs 12:17

"Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle of them all."

~ Oliver Wendell Holmes

3. Read Proverbs 6:16-19 and make a list of the seven detestable things that God hates.

4. Reflect on the following Proverbs and record what you learn:

Proverbs 3:3-4

Proverbs 12:19

Proverbs 12:22

Proverbs 14:25

Proverbs 19:5

Proverbs 19:22

5. As we strive to be truthful in our innermost being and avoid the temptation to deceive with lies, what does God give us according to Psalm 51:6?

6. What does Titus 1:2 reveal about God's character?

How did Jesus describe the devil's character in John 8:44?

Growing Stronger...

Lies and deception destroy trust and create confusion and instability. As Christians, we must always stand in truth. It takes great courage to face difficulties in our marriages and relationships with kindness and honesty, but it's the only way to real growth. What can we learn from the following verses about this?

Ephesians 4:15-16

Colossians 3:9-10

Final thoughts...

"Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle." - Psalm 43:3

Our honesty can bring hope, healing, and deliverance to others while our dishonesty can harm and destroy. Truthfulness is an essential component of building a strong church family. May our words be marked by honesty and integrity, inspiring trust and respect in those around us.

Joy and Sorrow

In this life, everyone will experience sorrow. Many will face financial hardships, difficult relationships, loss of loved ones or painful and tragic situations that cause us to feel sorrow. As Christians, we are not promised an easy life, but we are promised that our Lord Jesus will “never leave us nor forsake us” (Hebrews 13:5b). Jesus is always with us to comfort us in our sorrow and remind us that while we will have tribulation, we can “be filled with joy” because He has “overcome the world” (John 16:33 AMP).

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Joy

Sorrow

2. No one’s life is without pain and sorrow. Read the following verses and record what you learn about sorrow.

Proverbs 14:13

Proverbs 15:13

Jeremiah 30:15

2 Corinthians 7:10

"The road to sorrow has been well trodden, it is the regular sheep track to heaven, and all the flock of God have had to pass along it." ~ Charles Spurgeon

3. Joy is not based on our circumstances. Because joy is a “fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22), believers can experience joy even in times of sorrow. Look up the following verses and record what these verses reveal about the source of our joy.

Psalm 16:11

Proverbs 12:20

John 15:11

Romans 15:13

4. The Bible reveals that in the world we will have trouble, but Jesus has overcome the world. Read John 16:16-33 in the Amplified Bible. Jesus told His disciples they would sorrow; He also encouraged them by letting them know what was about to happen. Write a summary of what Jesus said.

What do joy and peace mean to you?

5. Read Proverbs 27:9 (NIV). In what way can friendships be a source of joy?

Take a moment to thank God for His gift of godly friendships. If you feel you are lacking in this area, pray and ask God to bring you a godly friend.

6. In Zephaniah 3:14-20, we see God’s faithfulness to deliver His people and bring them joy. Read the following verses and answer the questions.

With what attitude should we come to God? (verse 14)

What are we not to be doing? (verse 16)

What do you learn about God? (verse 17)

What promises did God make to those who were experiencing sorrow? (verses 18-20)

7. Revelation 21:1-4 beautifully reveals what is to come. God is faithful to His word. Prayerfully read this passage and record the promises of God that stand out to you.

Growing Stronger...

Joy is not determined by our circumstances but by our faithfulness to abide in Christ. As Christians, we know that this earth is not our home. We all experience great pain and sorrow, but in the midst of it we can keep our focus on the Lord and hold on to the promises He has given us. We do not mourn the way unbelievers mourn; we have the hope of heaven! Look up the following verses and record the promises you find.

Psalms 30:11-12

Psalms 46:1

Psalms 126:5

Romans 8:28

Final Thoughts...

Jesus is our perfect example of joy and sorrow intertwined. We see in Hebrews 12:2, "...that for the joy set before Him, He endured the cross..." The cross brought shame, pain, and sorrow to Jesus. Yet He went to the cross with the anticipation of the joy of providing salvation for all who would believe and receive Him. He willingly laid down His life so that we might have a relationship with God the Father and be with Him in heaven one day; that is true joy! Take a moment to pray; thank God for the gift He freely gave that allows you to experience true joy through the gift of salvation, regardless of your circumstances in this life.

Counsel and Rebuke

In times of struggle, it is important to seek wise counsel. Scripture supports the idea of gaining wisdom from others and tells us to make decisions with guidance. We are then challenged to break old patterns and begin new ways of living that may take our lives in an entirely different direction - one that will bring God glory.

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Counsel

Rebuke

2. Proverbs offers numerous verses emphasizing the importance and value of seeking wise counsel. Reflect on the following verses and record what you learn.

Proverbs 1:5

Proverbs 11:14

Proverbs 12:15

Proverbs 13:10

Proverbs 15:22

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver."

~ Proverbs 25:11

*"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given,
and the government will be upon His shoulder.
and He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." - Isaiah 9:6*

3. Reflect on the following verses and record what you learn about listening to our Wonderful Counselor.

Psalm 32:8-9

Psalm 33:11

Psalm 73:24

Isaiah 58:11

4. Read 2 Timothy 3:16. The Bible is inspired by God and provides comprehensive and complete truth concerning life and godliness. What will the end result be if we allow the Word of God to reprove, correct, and instruct us?

5. "There is none who does good, no, not one" (Psalm 14:3). This reveals our need for reproof and counsel as we walk with the Lord. Proverbs 6:23 says that reproofs for discipline "are the way of life". What can you learn about reproof from the following verses?

Proverbs 3:11-12

Proverbs 12:1

Proverbs 15:31-32

Proverbs 19:20

6. We must uphold the truth of God's Word even when it is not popular or convenient. We are encouraged to convince, rebuke, and exhort. How can we do this in a way that honors the Lord? (2 Timothy 4:2)

Growing Stronger...

Because God is love, our goal in every difficult relationship should be forgiveness and reconciliation. Bitterness and unforgiveness are a heavy burden for a soul to carry through life and can be the cause of many physical issues. Jesus provides a step-by-step process for dealing with a Christian who sins against you in Matthew 18:15-17.

How are we to go to him? (verse 15a)

What may happen if he listens? (verse 15b)

What are we to do if he will not listen? (verse 16)

What happens if he refuses to listen to anyone? (verse 17)

Final thoughts...

As we search the Scriptures, we must also allow them to search us. The Bible is a spiritual X-ray machine. We must allow the Holy Spirit to expose any dark spots in our character and prescribe the course of our own lives first. Matthew 7:5 tells us to remove the plank out of our own eye before attempting to remove the speck from someone else's. Counsel and rebuke are a way of life, however, we must follow the Lord's example of being gentle and humble in spirit in our interactions with others.

Sin

When Adam and Eve ate the fruit from “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Genesis 2), a whole new power entered our world: sin. The consequences were momentous. From then on, a human's natural state was one of rebellion against God; we experienced spiritual as well as physical death. However, God's plan and destiny for His creation would not be derailed. Not only did God conquer death on our behalf through Christ, but He also gave believers the power to overcome sin. Through the wisdom of Proverbs and the Word, we find a roadmap to avoid sin and its consequences, as well as the keys to walking in victory.

1. Read James 1:14-15. Where does sin originate? (verse 14)

What are its consequences? (verse 15)

2. Record the specific sins revealed in the following Proverbs:

Proverbs 10:19

Proverbs 14:21

Proverbs 21:4

Proverbs 24:9

What consequences for sin do you see in the following Proverbs?

Proverbs 5:22

Proverbs 10:29

Proverbs 14:34

Proverbs 21:15

Proverbs 22:8

*"Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay,
and cost you more than you want to pay." ~ Anonymous*

3. Proverbs 20:9 says, "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?'" No amount of sacrifice or attempted obedience can cleanse and purify us from our sin, but God did not leave us without hope. According to John 3:16-17, what is God's solution to sin?

4. Read Romans 6:8-11. How has Christ's death and resurrection freed us from the power of sin?

"We think much about liberty, but the liberty that we desperately need is the freedom from sin purchased on the cross of Jesus." ~ Paul Tripp

5. How can you offer yourself to God as "an instrument of righteousness"? (Romans 6:13)

6. The Bible makes it clear that before we were saved, our sin and rebellion sentenced us to death. But now that we're saved, our standing before God has completely changed. Our identity is made new; we are now children of God! Read the following verses and describe your new identity in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21

Ephesians 1:4

1 John 3:1

7. How has your new God-given identity changed the way you live?

8. As believers in Jesus, God no longer views us as sinners but as redeemed. (Romans 8:1) However, because we are human, we will still fall short. What does 1 John 1:7-9 call us to do when we allow sin to enter our lives?

Growing Stronger...

While sin comes from living in our flesh, there are other factors at play that we must be aware of to stand firm against it. 1 Peter 5:8 reminds us that Satan stalks us like a lion. Although he can never make us sin, he will tempt us through lies and deception. The world around us can also exert pressure. If we forget our new identity, we can easily revert to acting like our old selves. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. How is God faithful when we are tempted?

When we identify an area of our life that's consistently sinful, despite our efforts to break free, it's essential to recognize the invisible spiritual battle that rages around us. We may be walking in a pattern of sin that has been learned and passed down through generations. What does 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 say about the "weapons of our warfare" and what they do?

Read Ephesians 6:10-18. God provides us with armor that we are "to put on" every day. How does this armor provide defense and offense against the enemy?

Ephesians 6:18 says to pray in the Spirit always. It's an important reminder that prayer is powerful! Is there an area of your life where, through prayer, God brought you victory?

Is there an area of your life that feels bound or needs freedom?

Based on the verses you read above, how can you walk in the victory provided for you through Christ?

Final Thoughts...

Take a moment to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any strongholds of sin or deception in your life. Confess, repent, and consider sharing your struggle with a close friend. (James 5:16) Begin replacing the lie at the center of that stronghold with truth! Remember, God "gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Corinthians 15:57)

Friendships

Having a good friend is one of the greatest gifts you will ever give yourself. A good friend will boost your happiness, lower your stress, and reduce your risk of health problems. A true friend will support and uplift you through all the twists and turns of life and inspire you to reach your fullest potential as a child of God.

1. Read the following verses and comment on what you learn about friendships.

Proverbs 17:17

Proverbs 27:6

Proverbs 27:17

2. Colossians 3:12-14 describes the attributes of a good Christian friend. Because we have been "chosen of God, holy and beloved," what are we encouraged to put on?

Choose 1 or 2 of these attributes and explain what they mean.

"Shared sorrow is half the sorrow; shared joy is double the joy!"

~ Anonymous

3. In Genesis 2:18, God said, "It is not good that man be alone." In times of difficulty, a faithful friend can light up the darkness by reminding us of God's promises. What vital truths can you learn about friendships from the following verses?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Romans 12:15

Galatians 6:2

In what ways can we "bear one another's burdens"?

4. What are we to look for in true friends?

Proverbs 13:20

1 Thessalonians 5:11

What should we look to avoid when choosing close friends?

Proverbs 22:24-25

Proverbs 25:19

5. Loyalty is important for cultivating friendships. What do these verses reveal about loyalty?

Proverbs 18:24

Proverbs 27:9-10

6. What can cause great damage to a friendship?

Proverbs 16:28

Proverbs 17:9

Growing stronger...

The world is experiencing a loneliness epidemic. Social media and the internet are replacing community causing people to be more isolated than ever. The book of Acts is an example of the church fulfilling the ideals of friendship. Read the following verses and share your observations about the early church.

Acts 2:42-47

Acts 4:32-35

Final Thoughts...

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants; for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends...” (John 15:13-15a)

Our greatest joy is found in fellowship with God and one another. We have been given everything we need through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to cultivate friendships well to the glory of God. Write a prayer asking God to help you be a faithful friend.

The only way to have a friend is to be one.
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Gossip

It is no surprise that our words are important. What we say, who we say it to, and the intent of our words can speak truth and edify or spread contention and gossip. Gossip is sin. It can be spoken for a moment yet leave lasting effects. We need to guard our mouths and check our hearts before speaking. We need to stay in our lane and be obedient to God's will and purpose for our words.

1. It is important to recognize what God's word says about gossip. Look up the following verses and record what is said about the one who gossips.

Proverbs 11:13

Proverbs 13:3

What do these verses reveal about the person who is not gossiping?

2. God's word warns against gossip. What does gossip cause according to Proverbs 16:28?
3. How have you felt after finding out a friend has gossiped about you?

How does Matthew 18:15 say we should handle it?

4. What should we do when the Holy Spirit convicts us of gossiping? (Proverbs 28:13)

*"You are only ever judgmental in places you think you are righteous.
You know you aren't in a good place if the sin of someone else
concerns you more than your own." ~ Paul David Tripp*

5. Gossip is unique in that not only is the one speaking sinning, the one listening can also be drawn into sin. Look up Proverbs 18:8 in the Amplified Bible and record why someone would be drawn in to gossip.

6. According to Proverbs 20:19, how should we respond to someone who gossips?

7. What does Psalm 34:13 say about how we should speak to others?

8. Sin always has consequences. Read Matthew 12:36-37 and summarize what it reveals about our words.

9. The Old Testament tells the story of Moses' sister and brother who were found guilty of gossiping against Moses and his wife. Read Numbers 12:1-15 and record how God dealt with Miriam and Aaron.

What can you personally apply to your life from this account?

Growing Stronger...

In moments of weakness, we may find ourselves tempted to gossip. At times like these, we must allow the Holy Spirit to convict us and help us think before we speak about another, even if it's truthful or under the guise of prayer. God gives us many verses of how we are to edify and not tear others down with our words. Look up the following verses and record what you learn.

Psalm 19:14

Galatians 5:25-26

Ephesians 4:29

1 Thessalonians 4:11

Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.

~ Psalm 141:3

Final Thoughts...

Whether we have hurt others or have been hurt by gossip, we need to seek forgiveness and reconciliation. When we are tempted to criticize or slander another to make ourselves look good, to feel better about ourselves, or for any reason at all, we can know that we have a heart problem. Prayerfully read Colossians 3:13-17. Ask the Lord to give you His heart toward others and to help you reconcile with anyone He brings to mind.

Marriage

Marriage was designed by God. It is not a social convenience or simply an invention for living together. **Marriage is ordained by God to be a covenant of love and respect between a man and a woman.** It is designed to give stability to society. However, it is also the union of two sinners and will need divine intervention for it to be something that brings glory to God.

1. While there are only a few passages in the Bible that specifically address marriage, it is important that we rely on them to provide God's blueprint for marriage. What is the biblical view of marriage according to the following verses?

Genesis 1:27-28

Genesis 2:18-25

Matthew 19:4-6

Ephesians 5:21-33

1 Peter 3:1-9

Hebrews 13:4

2. Prayerfully read 1 Corinthians 7:1-16 and answer the following questions.

Why is it important for each man to have his own wife and each woman her own husband? (verse 2)

When is it ok to withhold sexual intimacy? (verses 4-5)

Why is it important to keep that part of your marriage healthy?

What instruction does Paul give to the unmarried and the widow? (verses 8-9)

Using your own words, summarize verses 10-16.

"Love at first sight is easy to understand. It's when two people have been looking at each other for a lifetime that it becomes a miracle." ~ Amy Bloom

3. Proverbs 12:4 says, "An excellent (or noble) wife is the crown of her husband," symbolizing honor and support. A wife's strength can uplift her husband, while a disgraceful attitude can bring him down. What can you learn about the contentious woman from the following Proverbs?

Proverbs 19:13

Proverbs 21:9

Proverbs 21:19

Proverbs 27:15-16

Proverbs 31:25-26 describes a woman who is **not** contentious. What do you see?

4. The greatest decision you will ever make, apart from surrendering to Christ, is deciding who you will marry. What wisdom do the following Proverbs offer regarding choosing a spouse?

Proverbs 1:5

Proverbs 9:9

Proverbs 13:20

Note the contrasts in the following verses. What do you see?

Proverbs 11:22

Proverbs 31:30

5. Understanding love is critical to building a marriage that will glorify God. In your own words, describe the characteristics of love, according to 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

Growing Stronger...

Building strong character is a continuous journey. A godly wife is committed to upholding the Christian values that reflect God's love and grace. This serves as a light to her family and community, inspiring everyone around her. What do you learn from the following verses about being a godly wife?

Proverbs 14:1

Proverbs 31:10-12

Final Thoughts...

In order to build a strong marriage, our relationships and responsibilities must be wisely managed and given their proper priority:

- #1 Nourishing a vital relationship with Jesus (Matthew 6:33)
- #2 Meeting our husband's needs (Proverbs 31:10-12)
- #3 Nurturing our children (Proverbs 22:6, Titus 2:4)
- #4 Keeping a home (Titus 2:5, Proverbs 31:27)
- #5 Adding whatever else time and energy permit (Proverbs 31:13-24)

The demands of life can often try and disrupt God's order. Search your heart and ask God to show you if you are balancing these properly. Ask God for His wisdom and help to make the necessary changes.

Adultery

In the book of Proverbs, God offers clear and sobering wisdom about the dangers of adultery. As women seeking to walk in God's truth, we are called to guard our hearts and honor the sacred covenant of marriage. Whether married or single, we must commit to purity in thought and action, encouraging one another to live with integrity and holiness in a world that normalizes sin. The Bible is very clear on some prescriptions that, if applied, will keep us safe from adultery.

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Adultery

2. What should we pay close attention to according to Proverbs 5:1-5?

What reasons are given?

3. How does Proverbs 2:16-19 describe an adulterous woman?

4. Read the following verses and record some of the consequences of committing adultery.

Proverbs 6:24-29

Proverbs 6:32-33

"God is always doing 10,000 things in your life, and you may not even be aware of three of them. The brokenness of sin, including adultery, is not the end when Christ is in the story."

~ John Piper

5. Read the following Proverbs. In your own words, write out some of the words of caution that can deter adultery.

Proverbs 5:7-9

Proverbs 5:15

Proverbs 5:18-20

6. One of the Ten Commandments is, "You shall not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14, Deuteronomy 5:18, Matthew 5:27, Matthew 19:18, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20) In addition to infidelity between married couples, what does the Bible warn regarding other sexual sins?

Matthew 5:27-28

Mark 7:21

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

1 Corinthians 7:5

Galatians 5:16-21

1 Thessalonians 4:3

"You are not beyond the reach of mercy. However far you have gone, the LORD's arm is not shortened that it cannot spare." ~ Charles Spurgeon

Growing Stronger...

For women walking through healing from infidelity in their marriages, the wisdom in Proverbs reminds us of both the seriousness of adultery and the hope found in repentance and restoration. Proverbs 6:27 NLT asks, "Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothing being burned?" A vivid picture of how sin, especially sexual sin, always brings pain.

Is there a place in your life where you have compromised?

What do the following verses reveal is at the root of compromise?

Jeremiah 2:13

James 4:4

What would it look like to trust God with that part of your heart today?

What hope and assurance do you find in the following verses?

Lamentations 3:22-23

1 John 1:9

Final Thoughts...

God offers a path to restoration. Proverbs 4:23 NIV says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." As we study this hard subject, let us not only be reminded of the weight of sin but also the power of repentance, grace, and God's ability to redeem. No matter our past, we can walk in purity, and freedom through Christ.

Children

God has designed the family as the bedrock for Christian society. However, nothing will test your faith in God more than getting married and raising children. A family is a group of naturally sinful and contentious people with different personalities, living for a dream bigger than themselves, working through difficulties and disappointments to make that dream come true. The training of children is a high calling that will profoundly alter your home and our society forever.

1. Psalm 127:3 says that children are a "heritage" and a "reward". Using a dictionary or online resource, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Heritage

Reward

2. If you want to build a strong family, the foundation must be the never-changing truth of the Bible. Right and wrong are not subjective. God's Word is very clear. What do the following verses say about our responsibility to carry His truth to the next generation?

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

Psalm 78:4-8

Psalm 145:4

3. The Bible instructs children to willingly submit themselves to their parent's leadership and guidance; it also instructs parents to be the kind of example a child can follow. Read Ephesians 6:1-4 in the Amplified Bible and write it in your own words.

*"If it was going to be easy to raise kids,
it never would have started with something called labor."*

~ Barbara Johnson

4. Godly discipline provides an umbrella of protection during a child's most vulnerable years. The goal is not punishment, but discipleship, giving them guidelines and training them to make God-honoring decisions that will bless their lives. What do the following Proverbs teach you about discipline?

Proverbs 13:24

Proverbs 22:6

Proverbs 22:15

Proverbs 23:13-14 NLT

5. What further insight do you gain from Ecclesiastes 8:11?
6. Read Proverbs 29:15-17 and answer the following questions.

What is the result of "the rod and rebuke"?

What will be the fruit of "a child left to himself"?

What will be the fruit if you correct him?

7. What attitude and goal should you have when disciplining your child? (Galatians 6:1 AMP)

Growing Stronger...

It has been said that “rules without relationship equals rebellion.” Nobody wants to follow a dictator. Taking the time to invest in a strong relationship with your child(ren) by listening to them, caring for them, and being interested in their lives as they grow up lays a foundation of mutual respect that will hold them close when family values are tested. Brainstorm ideas of how to maintain a strong relationship and stay connected to your children through the following developmental stages:

Pre-school years

Elementary years

Middle School / Jr. High years

High School years

College / Young Adult years -

Final Thoughts...

Parents are instrumental in molding their children’s physical, emotional, and spiritual growth. Parents provide the necessary care, establish routines, and create an encouraging environment for learning and development. What are some of the Christian routines that you have established in your home that will encourage a biblical world view for your child(ren) as they grow up?

Honor

Honor is recognizing the value of something. Throughout the Bible we are called to give honor to various authority figures. Giving honor to God involves acknowledging His authority, power, and goodness in all aspects of our lives. It is expressed through our worship, praise, and ultimately through our obedience to Him and to His will.

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Honor

2. Read the following verses and summarize them in your own words:

Proverbs 3:9

Revelation 4:9-11

3. In addition to honoring the Lord, we see in Romans 13:7 that we are to “give honor to whom honor is due.” What do the following verses reveal about who we are to honor?

Leviticus 19:32

Esther 1:20

Matthew 15:4

1 Timothy 1:17

1 Timothy 5:17

4. The following verses reveal various characteristics of those deserving honor. What do you discover?

Proverbs 11:16

Proverbs 15:33

Proverbs 18:12

Proverbs 21:21

Proverbs 22:4

Proverbs 29:23

How are these characteristics evident in your life?

*"No person was ever honored for what he received.
Honor has been rewarded for what he gave." ~ Calvin Coolidge*

5. What do the following verses reveal about how we are to honor God?

Psalm 100:2

1 Corinthians 10:31

1 Peter 1:15-16

What are some practical things that you can do daily to honor God?

6. Exodus 20:12 is the only commandment that comes with a promise. It says, "Honor your father and mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you." Honoring your parents will look different throughout your lifetime based on your personal situation. How can you honor your parents today?

7. Giving honor is respecting someone's authority. We see in the gospels that Jesus was not honored in His hometown. (Matthew 13:53-58, Mark 6:1-6, Luke 4:16-30) Instead, His wisdom and authority were questioned. Can you recall a time when your authority was not honored? How did you respond in comparison to how Jesus responded?

Growing Stronger...

God is our Creator and the ultimate authority in our lives. Throughout the Bible, we see the characteristics of God that make Him more than worthy of honor and praise. Read the following verses in the New Living Translation and record what you learn about who God is.

Genesis 17:1

Genesis 22:14

Exodus 3:14

Exodus 15:26

Exodus 17:15

Judges 6:24

1 Samuel 2:2

Final Thoughts...

We live in a culture that prefers to honor self rather than an authority figure. Honoring others has fallen by the wayside and has been replaced with wanting everyone to be on equal standing. But there are many people in our lives who are worthy of honor. People who have impacted us by their humility, grace, and compassion are worthy of our honor. Take a moment and ask God to show you who you can honor today. Perhaps a parent, a Sunday school teacher, or a friend has impacted your life and deserves to be honored by you. Consider taking them to coffee or writing them a note to thank them for the influence they have had on your life.

The Proverbs 31 Woman

Proverbs 31:10-31 is a beautiful description of an excellent wife. It starts with “Who can find?” implying that it will be very difficult to find such a woman, but it is a goal worth pursuing. Personality and temperament are from the Lord, but a woman’s character is developed over time by making right choices in difficult situations. A close look at this woman may help us to set priorities managing our own time, resources, and gifts. As we are told not who she is, but what she does, this incredible woman comes alive.

The Proverbs 31 woman is a woman who can be trusted. (verses 10-12)

1. How do these verses describe a woman who is trustworthy?

2. How can a person become worthy of someone’s trust?

The Proverbs 31 woman is a hard worker. (verses 13-16)

3. Make a list of the ways she works hard.

4. What do you think a modern-day, hard-working woman looks like?

The Proverbs 31 woman is strong. (verses 17-20)

5. In what ways is she strong?

6. How could you exhibit more strength in your day-to-day life?

The Proverbs 31 woman is creative. (verses 21-24)

7. In what ways was she creative?

8. How are you creative?

The Proverbs 31 woman is a servant. (verses 25-29)

9. Why do her children rise up and bless her?

10. How does her husband describe her?

The Proverbs 31 woman fears the LORD. (verses 30-31)

11. Explain what it means to be a woman who "fears the LORD."

12. How do her works bring her praise?

"The beauty of a godly woman is not merely skin deep but emanates from the depth of a soul anchored in faith, love, and compassion."

~ Anonymous

Growing Stronger...

The Proverbs 31 woman had her eye on the prize. She knew exactly what she wanted and she went after it every day. She valued trustworthiness, hard work, strength, creativity, service to others, and fearing God. This is such a strong contrast to the culture we live in which honors wealth, talent, beauty, and success. From the following verses, what qualities should we cultivate in order to become a Proverbs 31 woman?

Romans 12:1

1 Timothy 2:9-10

James 1:27

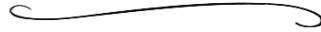
1 John 2:15-17

Final Thoughts...

The Proverbs 31 woman feared God. This one decision influenced all of her relationships and responsibilities which in turn brought her great honor and respect. She served her family with a joyful heart, seeing it as the best job ever. At the end of her life, the most important people in her world sang her praises. Write a prayer asking God to help you become a Proverbs 31 woman.

A Portrait of the Proverbs 31 Woman

...her worth is far above rubies...



1. She is an **Excellent Wife**. (verse 10)
2. She is **Trustworthy**. (verse 11)
3. She **Does What is Good**. (verse 12)
4. She **Delights in Work**. (verse 13)
5. She is **Frugal**. (verse 14)
6. She is **Industrious**. (verse 15)
7. She is **Wise**. (verse 16)
8. She keeps **Physically Healthy**. (verse 17)
9. She is **Hard Working**. (verse 18)
10. She is **Creative**. (verse 19)
11. She is **Generous**. (verse 20)
12. She is **Not Fearful**. (verse 21)
13. She is **Modest**. (verse 22)
14. She **Respects her Husband**. (verse 23)
15. She is **Confident in Business**. (verse 24)
16. She is **Strong and Dignified**. (verse 25)
17. She is **Optimistic and Smiles at the Future**. (verse 25)
18. She **Thinks before Speaking**. (verse 26)
19. She is **Kind**. (verse 26)
20. She is **Not Lazy**. (verse 27)
21. She is **Nurturing**. (verse 28)
22. She is **Blessed by her Family**. (verse 29)
23. She **Values Inner Beauty**. (verse 30)
24. She **Fears the LORD**. (verse 30)
25. She is **Praised in the Community**. (verse 31)

~ Friends, Prayer Requests... ~

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

~ Hebrews 13:8