Wisdom: Advice for Good Living





Lent is a season in the church year that precedes Easter. It is a seven-week period during which we strive to walk more closely with Jesus and his teachings. It is a time when we look inward and reflect on our own individual relationship with Christ and how closely we are following him. This year during Lent we will focus on Proverbs 4, which teaches us the value of living with God's wisdom and how to keep that in focus as move from day to day. Each week we will examine a different scripture that connects with a different part of Proverbs 4 and which show us how we can live lives rooted in the wisdom of God's Word.

2019 has been about New Beginnings for us at Central. Having spent the first two months exploring the many ways God gives us second chances, we know turn our attention to the question: "What are we going to do with the second chance God gives us?" We hope to answer that question with these words: "By learning to live by the wisdom and God and the teachings of Christ."

SEEKING WISDOM

MARCH 10

Proverbs 4:5

Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth.

Acquire wisdom! Do what is right. Acquire understanding and discernment. Do not ignore them or forget them. Do not turn away from my spoken commandments.

Christians are taught throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament to acquire wisdom and understanding so that we might grow in the likeness of Christ and exhibit His character. God's wisdom is far above our own. Yet, He made a way for us to attain it. God's ways are higher than ours. Yet, He made a way for us to grow in Him—through relationship with Jesus and through the Holy Scriptures.

Find a quiet place. Go to prayer and imagine yourself in conversation with God. Ask God to help you acquire wisdom, understanding, and discernment. Seek out scriptures that pertain to wisdom, understanding, and discernment by exploring your Bible or type the words, "wisdom scriptures" in your URL window. Do the same for "understanding scriptures" and "discernment scriptures." Read the passages and think upon them. Write down how the passages and exercise might influence your thinking, feelings, and actions.

Helpful Link:

https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/wisdom-bible-verses/

PRAYER/MEDITATION

MARCH 17

Proverbs 4:4

He taught me, and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live."

Take hold and keep in your heart the sum of all my words; observe and conform to my commandments, let them influence your mind, emotions and conscience and awaken to the fullness of life.

Christians are taught throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament to receive and retain the Word of God in our hearts. In doing so we are awakened to fullness of life and peace. We might allow God's word to saturate our lives by remaining close to Jesus through prayer and by remaining close to God's Word through study and meditation.

Find a quiet place. Go to prayer and imagine yourself in conversation with God. Think of a question or concern you've been wrestling with this past week and ask God to help you with it. God will give wisdom to anyone who seeks wisdom and asks for it. Listen patiently. Use your Bible or the Internet to look up passages that pertain to your questions. For instance, type, "scriptures for anger" or "scriptures for confusion" in the URL window. Pick a couple of scriptures to meditate on. Write down how this practice might influence your thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Helpful Links:

https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/anger-bible-verses/

https://www.openbible.info/topics/confusion

BOUNDARIES

MARCH 24

Proverbs 4:23

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

You are assigned responsibility to surround (set boundaries) and keep (watch over) your heart with the charge to protect and preserve it because your heart is the (internal) source from which all manner of health and (endless) life are derived and continued.

Christians are taught throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament that the heart is physical, psychological, and spiritual. It is the seat of our emotions and the place within us that houses and perpetuates our relationship with God.

Find a quiet place. Go to prayer and imagine yourself in conversation with God. Ask God to show you areas that you might have fallen short in setting healthy boundaries. See what the Bible says about how we are to care for and guard our heart. Go to scriptures or type the words, "heart scriptures" in your URL window. Read the passages that come up. Write down how the passages and exercise might influence your thinking, feelings, and actions.

Helpful Link:

https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/heart-bible-verses/

INSTRUCTION/EDUCATION

MARCH 31

Proverbs 4:13

Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; guard her, for she is your life.

Grow strong in instruction. Do not abandon the discipline of learning. Protect instruction. Always keep her in your view because she is your life and wellness.

Christians are taught throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament to continue in our faith by learning about Christ's character. Learning is intentional. It is purposeful and active. In Proverbs 4:13 we are invited to keep learning, always! We are warned to protect what we have learned because good instruction contributes to our very lives and wellness.

Find a quiet place. Go to prayer and imagine yourself in conversation with God. Ask God to show you areas that you might benefit from more instruction or education See what the Bible says about education or learning. Go to scriptures or type the words, "scriptures about education" in your URL window. Read the passages that come up. Write down how the passages and exercise might influence your thinking, feelings, and actions.

Helpful Link:

https://www.openbible.info/topics/education

REPENTANCE / FORGIVENESS

APRIL 7

Proverbs 4:14;24

Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil doers. Put away from you crooked speech and put devious talk far from you.

Never enter the way of wickedness; it is the opposite of God's character; neither travel on the road of sin. It opposes what is good and it contrasts God's fulness of life for you. Remove perverted speech from your lips; depart from it! Become far distant from devious, crooked language.

Christians are taught throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament to do what the Word of God says (in comparison to just listening to sermons). We reflect God's character when we obey Biblical directives. Two ways we can act in obedience to the Word are remain far away from the way of wickedness and sin and remain far away from perverted, deviant language.

Find a quiet place. Go to prayer and imagine yourself in conversation with God. Ask God to help you see how you have been disobedient to his directives this past week. Listen patiently. Repent and ask for forgiveness. God is full of grace, mercy, love, and goodness. Receive your forgiveness. Write down how this passage might influence your thinking, feelings, and actions.

Helpful Link:

https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/forgiveness-bible-verses/

	

RELATIONSHIPS

APRIL 14

Proverbs 4:20-22

My son, attend to my speech; and apply thine ear to my words: ²¹ that thy fountains may not fail thee; keep them in *thine* heart. For they are life to those that find them, and health to all *their* flesh.

My Son, listen, pay close attention and obey the commandments of God. Submit your understanding to them. Do not turn your sight or your attention away from them. Keep them and guard them deep within your heart because they give and restore life to those who attain them, and they are health and restoration for the whole body.

Christians are taught throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament that wisdom lives peaceably with others. Healing for the whole body is found when we submit our understanding to the commandments of God and keep them in our heart. John 13:34 we read, *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.* The church is called the Body of Christ. and following the commandments of God brings health and restoration to the whole body.

Find a quiet place. Go to prayer and imagine yourself in conversation with God. Ask God to help you better understand how submitting to the commandment of love might bring healing and restoration to a personal relationship with someone you know. Type in "love scriptures" in your URL window or get out your Bible and search. How might you contribute to the aforementioned healing and restoration? Write down how the passages and exercise might influence your thinking, feelings, and actions.

Helpful Link:

https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/bible-verses-about-love-25-awesome-scripture-quotes/