

student counsel

Selections from Proverbs

So—What's the best advice you were ever given?

Advice helps us to avoid mistakes that other people have made.

Solomon was the king of advice givers. God had made him the wisest man in history. But Solomon also made mistakes. A *lot* of mistakes. Which he learned from.

▶ Read Proverbs 22:17-21.

- ▶ What do you know about Solomon that would make him qualified to make these statements about his teachings?

▶ Read Proverbs 23:4-5.

- ▶ Solomon was not only one of the wisest but also one of the wealthiest men in history. What do you think would lead him to say something like this about money?

▶ Read Proverbs 23:17-21.

- ▶ Here's some advice for potential partyers. What two reasons does Solomon give for not hanging out with people who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat? How do you see these things happening?

▶ Read Proverbs 24:3-6.

- ▶ Solomon uses the metaphor of a house to describe wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. What are some of the "rare and beautiful treasures" that wisdom, understanding, and knowledge can give us?

Proverbs 22:17-21

¹⁷Pay attention and turn your ear to the sayings of the wise; apply your heart to what I teach, ¹⁸for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart and have all of them ready on your lips. ¹⁹So that your trust may be in the LORD, I teach you today, even you. ²⁰Have I not written thirty sayings for you, sayings of counsel and knowledge, ²¹teaching you to be honest and to speak the truth, so that you bring back truthful reports to those you serve?

Proverbs 23:4-5, 17-21

⁴Do not wear yourself out to get rich; do not trust your own cleverness. ⁵Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.

¹⁷Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD. ¹⁸There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off. ¹⁹Listen, my son, and be wise, and set your heart on the right path. ²⁰Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, ²¹for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.

Proverbs 24:3-6

³By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; ⁴through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. ⁵The wise prevail through great power, and those who have knowledge muster their strength. ⁶Surely you need guidance to wage war, and victory is won through many advisers.

»mon

Read Proverbs 12:5. Have you ever wondered why so many people write for advice from a columnist they've never met? Who do you turn to when you need help? Thank God for people whose advice you can trust.

»tues

It's normal when beginning a new game to read the instructions first. Think about something you'll be doing in the near future that will be new for you. See if you can't find some instruction on it in the Bible. Ask the Lord to instruct you as the time for this new thing approaches.

»wed

People have grown used to seeing immediate results. On the other hand, good growth takes time. Look at some pictures to see how you've changed over the years. Ask God for patience as you continue to grow spiritually.

»thurs

Do you ever think of turning to the Bible when someone asks you for counsel? Say a friend needed some advice on how to get along with his father. Where in the Bible would you direct him? Ask God to help you find the answers when you need them.

»fri

Read Proverbs 11:14. List five people you think are wise in the biblical sense. Pray for each of them by name.

»sat

Choose a wise person from yesterday's list and write an encouraging note. Tell this person one way his or her wisdom has helped you. Thank God for placing this person in your life.

Listen to advice
and accept
discipline, and
at the end you
will be counted
among the wise.
—Proverbs 19:20

TIMELESS GUIDANCE

Take a guess as to how old these quotes are—you might be surprised to see who wrote them (loosely translated, of course).

One thing's for sure: good advice is timeless.

- a. *The smartest people in the world are those who know how dumb they are.*
SOCRATES, AROUND 404 B.C.
- b. *He who blows off learning when he is young repeats the mistakes of the past, and has no hope for the future.*
EURIPIDES, AROUND 452 B.C.
- c. *Image is not everything.*
AESOP, AROUND 550 B.C.
- d. *No wisdom = no happiness.*
SOPHOCLES, AROUND 466 B.C.
- e. *Education is the best social security.*
ARISTOTLE, AROUND 344 B.C.
- f. *Wisdom depends more on attitude than age.*
PLAUTUS, AROUND 200 B.C.
- g. *Nothing is too difficult to understand for those who don't give up.*
TERENCE, AROUND 185 B.C.