

GOD'S WISDOM FOR LIFE, PART 1: "THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM"

PROVERBS 1:1-7

Ps. Jeffrey Susila

Personal Introduction

Hi everyone. If you don't know me, I'm Jeff - one of the pastors at HMCC of Jakarta. And it's my privilege to be preaching the Word of God for us today.

Sermon Series Introduction

Today is a bit special because we're about to start a new sermon series.

And our new sermon series is called "God's Wisdom for Life." Where we'll be going through the book of Proverbs together (and specifically focusing on Proverbs chapters 1-9).

Because the book of Proverbs can actually be split into 2 parts:

You have chapters 1-9 - serving as an introduction to the book of Proverbs.

And then you have the proverbs (or the wise sayings) themselves, which don't actually begin till chapter 10.

But chapters 1-9 are actually so important in order for us to understand these proverbs within the right context (and more importantly, with the right heart posture). So that's why we'll be focusing on chapters 1-9; and hopefully, this sermon series will be helpful for us & will inspire us to study the remaining book of Proverbs with the right mindset & a humble heart posture.

Before we begin, let me pray for us.

Sermon Introduction

Since we'll be diving into wisdom literature, let's start this new sermon series with a big reflection question: What does it mean for you... to live a good life? What does it mean for you to live well in this world?

I'll give you a bit of time to think. I know that's a big question to think about on a Sunday morning/afternoon. But that's basically the question that wisdom literature (like Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes) are asking: "what is this world that we're living in? And what does it look like to live well in this world?"

Maybe now, you have a few things in mind already...

Ok, I won't ask you to share, but let's say we get a random person from the streets of TGR/JKT. Let's get a young university student. If we're to ask them "what does it look like for you to live well in this world?"

They'll most likely say something like, "to live well means to do well in school, and to get a successful job, and to earn a lot of money."

Ok, great. And then what?

"And then have a nice home, and a nice car."

Ok, what's next?

"And then get married."

"And then have children."

Great! And then?

"And then... retire and enjoy life."

And then? "Well... and then that's it. Then death."

For a lot of people, that's their reality. That's it. That's what it's all about, and then comes the end of the good life.

<pause>

This world teaches us that that's all there is to life in this world. And if you go to a bookstore or if you go online, you can see many books and articles providing us with some sort of worldly wisdom on how to be successful and how to live well in this world.

You'll see articles with titles like:

"The ten things you need to have... to get into your dream school"

"Five steps you need to do... to get the job you always wanted"

"The one secret you need to know... to get that boy or girl to like you"

The world seems to offer all kinds of wisdom & advice to help you achieve this good life that we've always wanted.

But... as Christians, don't we believe that there's more to life than this? Don't we believe that God is the one who gave us our lives and who created this world? So then what does God - in His wisdom - have to say about all this? What's God's wisdom & instruction on how we can live well in this world that He's created?

Today, we'll begin to start answering this question (please note: this is just the start, and it's something we'll explore further in the sermon series).

Scripture Introduction

If you have your Bibles with you, please turn to Proverbs 1:1-7.

These are the first 7 verses introducing us to the entire book...

Throughout the book of Proverbs, you'll read about 2 ways about how to live in this world...

- A life of living well in God's world or a life of living poorly.
- A life where we tend to make good choices or a life where we often make poor choices.
- A life of wisdom or a life of foolishness.

The purpose of this book is to help us to live well in God's world by knowing & exercising wisdom and making good choices...

Scripture Reading

So let's read Proverbs 1:1-7 (ESV)

¹ The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

² To know wisdom and instruction,
to understand words of insight,

³ to receive instruction in wise dealing,
in righteousness, justice, and equity;

⁴ to give prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the youth—

⁵ Let the wise hear and increase in learning,
and the one who understands obtain guidance,

⁶ to understand a proverb and a saying,
the words of the wise and their riddles.

⁷ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

This is God's Word.

The One Thing

To truly know & grow in wisdom, we must begin with the fear of the Lord.

Overview

3 things we'll see in this introduction to Proverbs:

- I. An invitation for the young to know wisdom (vv. 1-4)
- II. A challenge for the wise to grow in wisdom (vv. 5-6)
- III. A warning for the foolish who despise wisdom (v. 7)

I. An invitation for the young to know wisdom (vv. 1-4)

Verse 1 starts with an important heading that introduces us to the author and the content of this book.

Proverbs 1:1 (ESV)

¹ The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

Now, to the Jewish audience during those times, these two names would need no further introduction: You have King David - known at the time as the greatest king in the history of Israel. And you have his son, King Solomon - known as the wisest king in the history of Israel.

And we're informed that the content of this book is going to be Solomon's proverbs - his wise sayings and his life lessons - (some were written by Solomon himself, and some were written by other authors and Solomon simply collected them).

This wouldn't be a surprise to the Jewish people because King Solomon was known as the father of Jewish wisdom literature -

We can get a bit more of Solomon's story if we go to 1 Kings 3 - Solomon was the king who was famously asked by God for the one thing that he'd want, and God said that He'd give him that one thing that he asks for. And what did Solomon ask for? Out of all the things that he could've asked for, Solomon asked God for... wisdom.

He wanted to be able to distinguish between what's right and wrong; he wanted to be able to make wise decisions, and govern his people well.

And God was pleased by Solomon's genuine desire for wisdom, and so God gave him a wise and discerning mind, and he was able to distinguish between what's right and wrong, he was able to make wise decisions, and govern his people well.

Not only knowing wisdom, but exercising wisdom...

That's basically what wisdom is - not only knowing the right things, but being able to apply what you know in the right way. It's been said that wisdom is the right knowledge, rightly applied. Not just head knowledge, but the skillful application of that knowledge. That's wisdom.

<pause>

Now, like Solomon... As God's people, we're also to rule (so to speak); we're to faithfully rule & steward the lives and resources that God has entrusted to us.

And I'm sure that all of us would also like to do that wisely - none of us want to make poor choices that would lead us (and others) to ruin. We all want to make good choices that would benefit us (and also benefit others).

And God also wants the same thing - He wants us to make good wise choices that would lead to life, not death. And so through the book of Proverbs... God is inviting us to know wisdom - to know this precious gift that he gave to Solomon... to know between right & wrong and how to wisely apply what we know, so that we may also live well in His world.

And that's basically the purpose of this book, and we see this purpose elaborated further in verses 2-4.

Let's take a look at verses 2-4 - The purpose of Proverbs, it's to help us...

Proverbs 1:2-4 (ESV)

²To know wisdom and instruction,
to understand words of insight,
³to receive instruction in wise dealing,
in righteousness, justice, and equity;
⁴to give prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the youth—

This book - these proverbs - they're meant to help us to know God's wisdom.

Through this book - God's wisdom that was gifted to Solomon... can be made known to us... and we too can learn how to live wisely.

Now, there's something interesting here... look at verse 4 - we see that there's one group of people that's specifically mentioned here. This is the main target audience for the book of Proverbs. It's written for the simple (or the youth) in mind.

Now, the "simple" here doesn't mean those who are not educated, but the word "simple" means something like "open." Because someone who's simple is someone who's open (or easily led or misled), naive, and unaware.

And the simple here is used synonymously with the youth. It doesn't mean that young people are all simple-minded. But it's referring to the general truth that if you are young, then you're most likely still trying to figure things out.

What's generally true is that those who are younger tend to be more naive. We see that this is generally true when we look at young kids - they're like open or blank canvases and they need guidance to understand how the world around them works. Without guidance, they may cross the street without looking left and right, they

may call each other mean names because they think it's funny and inadvertently hurt someone with their words, they may eat chocolate everyday if they could... Basically, they're unclear on what's right and wrong & what would be good or bad for them.

And in life, this is basically all of our starting points... at one point in our lives - we're this simple, young, naive child. And it's only over time that our blank canvas starts to get filled.

This is where we can start to be filled with true knowledge or false knowledge (or lies).

This is when your mind starts to be shaped by the things around you...

What your parents taught you about the good life, your family's expectations of what it means to be successful. What you heard from your friends.

What you saw in the movies, TV shows, and social media (about work, money, sex).

These things are like paint onto our blank canvases. And very quickly, even as a teen... our canvases are already filled with much paint, and on our canvas is a picture of what we think the good life looks like. And we already have our own thoughts and our own expectations of what's good for us and what's bad for us.

And then over time, as we grow older, we continue to consume more things that affect the way we think, what we aim for, how we make decisions, and these things all affect the trajectory of our lives.

And so over time, our minds are filled more and more with both truths and lies (about ourselves, about God, about how the world works). And over time, it can get more difficult for us to know what are truths and what are lies, and what's the wise thing to do & what's the unwise thing to do - it's all jumbled up in our minds.

That's why even though we may want to make good choices, we don't always do that... It's not always that simple and clear...

But God's wisdom in this book will help us filter through the truths and the lies...

Look at verse 2, this book will help the young "to know wisdom" - to truly know what's right and wrong & to know what it looks like to live out those truths.

Because if wisdom is the right knowledge, rightly applied. Then that implies that you first need to know the right knowledge (true knowledge) in the first place. Or else if it's false knowledge (or lies) that you're believing and applying in your life, then it wouldn't really matter if you're applying that correctly or not. Applying lies still wouldn't be helpful to you.

So, first we need to have the right knowledge. So then how can we even begin to know what is the truth - what is the truth about this world, about us & about our lives?

Well, this is when we can jump all the way to verse 7 - this unlocks the meaning behind this. This is the key verse:

Proverbs 1:7 (ESV)

⁷The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Not only the beginning of wisdom (or the application of knowledge), but the beginning of knowledge itself. So another way to say this is: the fear of the Lord is the beginning of true knowledge.

The world may teach us to define our own truths; to define who we are ourselves... but God's Word here says that true knowledge begins with Him! Not us!

That means true knowledge begins with God's knowledge - with what He says is right and wrong (not what we think is right and wrong).

And the fear of the Lord is to give God the respect and reverence that He deserves as the all-knowing God - and to acknowledge Him as the source of absolute Truth and infinite wisdom - that if our knowledge of what's right and wrong, what's good and bad... is different than God's... then we choose to rely on God's definitions. We humble ourselves before Him as humans with limited understanding.

And this is the heart-posture that's needed to truly know the wisdom that's contained in the book of Proverbs - we need a humble heart posture. We need to lower ourselves before God. And it's only when we begin to do this... that we - as the simple/young - can start to truly know knowledge and truly know wisdom (not relying on our own wisdom and understanding, but God's wisdom).

But here's the thing... that's easier said than done. Our sinful tendency is not to be humble; not to trust God's knowledge, but to trust our own knowledge & understanding.

What naturally happens is that we have our own standards that we judge ourselves and others by...

We often think: "Who I am and what I know and what I think is good... that's how I determine what's good and wise. Other people who don't do as I do or don't accept who I am... they're the ones who are wrong and they're unwise."

But let's be reminded, that kind of mindset can potentially be dangerous. That's how mankind fell into sin in the first place.

- Adam & Eve did not trust in God's definition of what's right and wrong, and they desired to define what's good and evil by their own understanding and so they ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good & evil. And in their naivety, they're led astray by the devil.
- In that moment, I don't think Adam & Eve thought that they're making a poor choice (they probably thought it was a good idea at the time).

And that's what's kinda scary here... because even for myself - when I reflect back on my life. I'm not sure if there's many times in my life when I thought: "Jeff, you're simple; you're unwise" I'm not sure if I've ever really thought that of myself... Even when I was 5 years old, I felt like I was smart and wise and thought that I knew what I was doing; even when I was a teenager (I felt like I knew what's good for me). And even now, I still have this same tendency to think this way...

And maybe I'm not the only one. Maybe some of us here can also relate with that - we never really see ourselves as simple.

- I think it's just because we only know what we know, and we don't know what we don't know.

And that's kinda scary. Because in hindsight, I was really foolish and unwise, and made some really poor choices in life. It's just that in the moment, you don't know that you're being unwise.

Friends, we must be wary of this sinful and prideful tendency that we have...

But with humility and the fear of the Lord, then we start to be able to head into the right path of a life of true wisdom.

Look at verses 2-3 - the word "instruction" is repeated 2 times in quick succession. That's important.

- The word "instruction" here also means discipline or correction.
 - As in something that's heading the wrong way, and so its trajectory needs to be corrected so it can start going the right direction.

Here's the thing - if we truly desire to know God's wisdom, then in our humility, we must also be open to correction (we must be teachable).

- We need to be open-minded and aware that our understanding may be wrong, and not always right.
- We need to be open to have our understanding be corrected by God's instruction.

And that's why here we see that for the simple and the young to truly accept this invitation to know God's wisdom, what's needed is humility and teachability.

Humility & teachability - being open to receive instruction and correction - those are actually marks of a wise person (and marks of someone who fears the Lord).

And so, over time, as we become more familiar with true knowledge, and as the way we think is more & more corrected and shaped by God's wisdom, then that's when we can understand and start to have insight - and start to be able to truly see what's right and wrong in God's sight.

Look at verse 4 - through this book - as the young humble themselves to receive correction (and be more wise)... they may then begin to have "prudence" and "discretion" - what that means is that they'll be able to see, and discern or judge correctly.

You'll be able to see things differently (not through the eyes of worldly wisdom, but through the eyes of God's wisdom).

- And what used to be just a blob of colors on our canvases (in our minds), then we start to be able to see and differentiate the different colors: what's black & what's white (what's right in accordance to God's standard, and what God considers to be wrong or sin).

And that means you'll then be able to discern or judge what's right and what's wrong as you make daily decisions related to your personal life, work, friendship, and other aspects of your life.

- If something seems muddled or unclear, a question that we can ask ourselves is: is this aligned with what I know of God's wisdom? Does God's Word command (or encourage) me to do something that I'm currently not doing? Or is it commanding me (or encouraging me) to stop doing what I'm currently doing?
 - Those simple questions can already help a young person to determine what would be wise or unwise for them to do.

So first, we have this invitation for the young to know wisdom. Second, we have...

II. A challenge for the wise to grow in wisdom (vv. 5-6)

Let's go to verses 5-6, as the simple and the young begin to know wisdom, and become wiser... we'll see that God's wisdom in Proverbs will continue to be very useful even for those who are already considered to be wise.

Proverbs 1:5-6 (ESV)

- ⁵Let the wise hear and increase in learning,
and the one who understands obtain guidance,
⁶to understand a proverb and a saying,
the words of the wise and their riddles.

So for those of us who have grown in wisdom - we're challenged to not stop learning; we're to continue to grow in our understanding; and to continue to grow in our wisdom.

This is another helpful reminder for us to not assume that we're already wise. We're to remain humble and teachable.

- Because this implies that we'll never be all-knowing, there's always something that we can learn.

So teenagers (and all of us) - is this our mindset and heart posture?

Again, this is a mark of a wise person (a mark of someone who continues to grow in wisdom) - they understand that they don't know everything and that their understanding is actually limited. So they're aware that they can continue to learn from others.

Look at verse 6 - How can we continue to grow in wisdom? Well, one way is by continuing to explore the deep riches of God's Wisdom in Proverbs. And we trust that over time, as we do so more and more, then we'll understand its riddles more and more...

Because when we think of a riddle - it's something that may seem obvious at first glance, but then something new can be learned from it the more you look at it, and study it, and reflect on it.

And it's the same with God's Word - the more time we spend reading it, reflecting on its teachings & meditating on it... the more we learn something new about it (even when we've read the same proverb or passage for the 100th time).

Now, look at verse 5 - As we understand God's Word more and more... what we'll obtain is... guidance.

- So God's Word becomes like a compass guiding our ways.
- God's teachings will light up our path. And what once seemed dark or hidden can now be seen more clearly.

Just like how an experienced detective would be able to see more clues and can consider more possibilities. Whereas a junior detective may only be considering 2 possible outcomes, the experienced detective can see things more clearly and see 5 more possibilities.

Growing in wisdom & having more guidance can be very helpful!

Especially because as we grow older and wiser, it seems as if our problems also grow more complex! It's as if our problems are growing with us! And we need even more wisdom!

And the things we're dealing with may no longer be black and white. It's no longer as clear as:

- "Should I lie or cheat to get what I want at school or at work?" (We know that's clearly wrong because God's Word clearly commands us not to do those things).

But what if we're dealing with something that's more gray and nuanced, like:

- "How should I faithfully pursue a relationship with someone I'm interested in?"
- OR "Which job should I take?"

This is when God's wisdom and guidance can help us to consider multiple things that we wouldn't otherwise even think about.

So, for example, some of us may be dealing with that question right now: "which job should I take?"

- Well, there are the obvious questions we should ask about the job, but maybe there are other questions that are not obvious at first. Like:
 - How would the scheduling affect me going to church every Sunday?
 - How would the job affect my relationship with God? My relationship with other members?
 - If I'm relocating, what are the churches in that new location that I can check out?
- These are probably the questions that Non-Christians would not consider, but Christians should.

And this is a mark of someone who fears the Lord - that in our decision making, we involve God and consider His wisdom and guidance... So church, do we do this?

God's Word may not tell us exactly which job to take or who to marry, but it does teach us guiding principles that we can wisely apply in our lives. So no matter what we're going through, God's wisdom speaks to all aspects of our daily lives.

Now, let's change gears a bit and go back to 1 Kings 3 - earlier, we learned that Solomon asked God for wisdom. And if we keep going in that same chapter, we can see evidence of Solomon growing in wisdom.

Now, as I share more of Solomon's story, notice how Solomon's growth in wisdom also reveals something... about the growth in his character...

This is what happened in 1 Kings 3 - Two women came to Solomon:

- One woman claimed that she has a baby who belongs to her.
- But then the second woman claimed that the first woman was lying and that the baby actually belonged to her.

So how could Solomon make a wise decision, and determine who's telling the truth and who's lying?

- The other people watching this might not have known what to do...

Solomon said "cut the baby in half! Give half to each woman." That's not the wise part.

- He wisely observed and was able to read between the lines... he saw what was not obvious...

One woman said, "don't kill the baby, give it to the other woman."

The other woman said. "Fine, just kill the baby. None of us can have him."

And Solomon said, "don't kill the baby, give him to the first woman. She's his mother."

- Solomon saw the genuine love that the true mother had for her son.
- He saw that it would be unrighteous and an injustice for this baby to be killed or to be given to someone else other than his true mother.

And that's why the people were in awe of what they saw; they're in awe of how wise and just their king was.

So then, what does Solomon's wisdom reveal about his character? It revealed that as he grew in wisdom, he also grew in character - he's growing into a king who's wise, just, and fair.

Now, if we quickly go back to verse 3 - Verse 3 implies that to know and exercise wisdom is to exercise righteousness, justice, and equity. What that means is that those things cannot be separated from wisdom. Unrighteousness would not be wise. Injustice would not be wise. To be wise is to be righteous. To be wise is to be just.

And those words don't only describe our actions, but our character.

Because how we apply wisdom reveals something about us as a person, and something about our hearts.

Knowing & applying wisdom may begin in our minds... but it quickly moves to the heart.

Because, you see, to grow in wisdom is to grow in character. To grow in wisdom is to grow in righteousness & justice.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus says:

Luke 7:35 (ESV)

³⁵ ...wisdom is justified by all her children.

What does Jesus mean? That there's children or fruit or evidence that's produced by someone who is truly wise. And that evidence is their character... or in other words, it's how God's good character is reflected in their lives and in their decision-making.

So that means that someone may appear wise and appear to be successful on the outside, but if they reach their success by doing dishonest work, and taking advantage of others, then they are not truly wise in the eyes of God.

But for us who do fear the Lord and are growing in wisdom, then I hope we can be encouraged that what this means is that as we grow in wisdom, we're also growing in our character.

And so this highlights all-the-more why it's important for us to desire to continue to grow in wisdom. Because to grow in wisdom is to grow in character - to grow in humility, teachability, and righteousness. In other words, to grow in godliness.

So first, we have this invitation for the young to know wisdom. Second, we have a challenge for the wise to continue to grow in wisdom. And finally, we have...

III. A warning for the foolish who despise wisdom (v. 7)

Verse 7 says this:

Proverbs 1:7 (ESV)

⁷The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

So here we're introduced to a third character: the fool.

And the fool is described here as someone who despises wisdom and despises instruction (or correction).

- Interesting word choice here - this is basically the same words used in verse 2.
 - Except this is referring to the exact opposite.
 - The fool is not like the one who knows wisdom, but instead hates wisdom.
 - The fool is not like the one who knows instruction and is open to correction, but instead hates correction.

- And why is that? Because in their pride, the fool thinks that they're already wise - that they do not need further wisdom because they already know everything, and thus, they do not need correction because they already assume that they're right and rarely wrong.

Even as I'm saying this, we may be thinking that this fool doesn't sound like us (it just sounds like someone we know).

But hold on... earlier we just talked about our sinful tendencies... that it's our tendency to rely on our own understanding; it's our tendency to think that we're already wise and to think that we're right most of the time. Doesn't that sound a lot like this foolish person?

It's humbling to think about it, but what this means is that our natural tendency is to be foolish.

<pause>

But... even though our tendency is to be foolish, that doesn't necessarily mean that we're fools.

Because here we're given a clear distinction of what separates the wise & the fool - It's the fear of the Lord.

- Those who fear the Lord may still have foolish tendencies, so we're not going to be making the wisest decisions all the time, so we do have to be wary of that.
- But... we're no fools.

Because those of us who've humbled ourselves before God... are wisely learning to rely on His wisdom more and more. And more and more... we're growing in wisdom and godliness, and beginning to see the world through His eyes - we're starting to see who God truly is and who we truly are.

Because in our humility and growing wisdom, we can clearly see that we're not perfect.

Actually, we've fallen short of God's perfect standard of righteousness (at one point, we didn't even know what's truly right & wrong!). We've strayed away from His wisdom; away from His standard of right and wrong.

- And instead of relying on God, we've relied on our own understanding instead.
- And for that, we know that the punishment that we justly deserve is eternal punishment in Hell.
 - In fact, the more we learn about justice, the more that makes sense. Because what would be unjust would be for God not to punish sin. If God is truly just, then He definitely should punish sin.

But the beauty of God's wisdom is in His redemptive plan to save His people.

- In His wisdom, He solved life's most mysterious riddle: How can God be perfectly just in punishing sinners for their sin... yet be able to promise that He'll save His people (even though they've sinned)?
 - There seems to be a contradiction there...

In His wisdom, God's redemptive plan consists of His only Son, Jesus Christ... the one who's fully human and fully God, and who came to the world and lived the perfect life that we could not (living & exercising wisdom perfectly). And he became our substitute and died on the cross for our sins.

- And thus, sin was justly punished.

Yet, in His grace and mercy, those who believe in Jesus will be counted as righteous in God's sight, and will not be punished in Hell but will have eternal life.

- And thus, through Jesus Christ, life's most mysterious riddle can be answered - because of Jesus, God is perfectly just and perfectly gracious and merciful.

That's the beauty of God's wisdom that we get to experience deeper and deeper each day! That's the beauty of His Gospel (the Good News of Jesus Christ).

So for those who have not yet put your faith in Christ, I invite you to consider your sins and to consider the wisdom of the Gospel. I invite you to fear the Lord - to fear the coming judgment that will come for those who reject Him...

But another way of saying "fear the Lord" - is to believe and put your faith in the Lord... And that's also what I invite you to do today.

So it can also be said that faith in the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

- I urge you to stop relying on the wisdom of this world and what the world teaches you about the good life. There's more to it than that - there's eternity more.
 - But it's either eternity in Hell or eternity in Heaven.
- So what good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?
 - God's Word warns you that there's no wisdom in that.

For Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation. True wisdom of the truly good life (eternal life in Heaven) begins with knowing him.

So I'd like to encourage you to talk to someone after the service about Jesus. We'd love to talk to you.

And - to conclude - for those of us who've put our faith in Christ... how can we continue to increase in our fear of the Lord? It's by deepening our knowledge of Christ, and investing in our relationship with him, the Word of God made flesh, God's wisdom personified...

- To know Jesus more and to be more like him (in character) is to grow in wisdom and to grow in godliness.

And the more we know our Lord and Savior, the more we see that the fear of the Lord... is also relationship with the Lord.

- And in our walk with Christ, there will be times when we question him (or tempted to think that it's not worth it or unwise to continue to follow the Lord). But have faith that He always has our good in mind (even when things don't go according to our plans).

And let's be comforted that faith in our sovereign God means that there's no pressure on us to know (or pretend like we know) everything - and we don't have to anxiously feel like it all depends on us (and our performance) to try to make the perfect decision all the time or else we can ruin our lives (or the lives of our loved ones). Instead, we wholly put our trust in the Lord - that He's the one who knows everything and everything is in His control.

And we have faith that even when we're unwise at times (even if we have missteps), we trust that God is sovereign over our lives & will continue to be with us even as we go through the ups & downs of life.

And more & more, may our desire to make wise decisions not be so that we can build a good life for ourselves, but so that we may honor Him with our lives. May that be our desire as we go through the book of Proverbs together; that we may know & grow in wisdom for the sake of His glory. Amen.

The One Thing

To truly know & grow in wisdom, we must begin with the fear of the Lord.

Let's pray.