

The Call of Wisdom

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 1

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 1:1-4, 7-8, 10, 20-22, 32-33

Key Verse: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7 (NRSV)

PROVERBS 1:1-4, 7-8, 10, 20-22, 32-33 (NRSV)

Proverbs 1:1-4

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

2 For learning about wisdom and instruction, for understanding words of insight,

3 for gaining instruction in wise dealing, righteousness, justice, and equity;

4 to teach shrewdness to the simple, knowledge and prudence to the young—...

7-8

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

8 Hear, my child, your father's instruction, and do not reject your mother's teaching;...

10

10 My child, if sinners entice you, do not consent.

20-22

20 Wisdom cries out in the street; in the squares she raises her voice.

21 At the busiest corner she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:

22 "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?"

32-33

32 "For waywardness kills the simple, and the complacency of fools destroys them;

33 but those who listen to me will be secure and will live at ease, without dread of disaster."

PROVERBS 1:1-4, 7-8, 10, 20-22, 32-33 (KJV)

Proverbs 1:1-4

1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

7-8

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

8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:...

10

10 My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

20-22

20 Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:

21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,

22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

32-33

32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

33 But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

KEY TERMS

- **Wise Dealing** – Show oneself attentive.
- **Simple** – Lacking depth of understanding; inexperienced.
- **Scoffers** – Mockers.
- **Equity** – Even, level, upright.
- **Prudence** – Skill and good judgment.
- **Fear** – Reverence, deep respect.
- **Shrewdness** – Power of devising; discretion.
- **Waywardness** – Turning away, renunciation of belief.
- **Complacency** – Self-satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of deficiencies.

INTRODUCTION

Growing up, my parents and grandparents had a lot of sayings and idioms that they would recite when trying to get us kids to learn a lesson. They would share their experiences and offer us insights that would help us when making our own decisions. Out of fear and respect, mostly fear, we listened to what they said; but, we did not receive it as relevant to our current situations.



What makes one ignore wisdom and not answer wisdom's call?

Like a lot of young people, we dismissed their words as being outdated, because as DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince put it, "Parents Just Don't Understand." It would be years before we were able to heed their warnings or even comprehend what they were trying to say to us and the value of it. What made us or anyone so resistant to wisdom? What makes one ignore wisdom and not answer wisdom's call? And, what exactly is wisdom?

TELLING THE BIBLE STORY

The author in today's text opens the book of Proverbs by first explaining the need for wisdom. He tells of the ways that wisdom benefits us and how, if followed, it will enhance our lives greatly. The writer goes on to encourage us to heed the instruction and advice of those in authority over us. But, despite all the author's push to get others to seek wisdom, wisdom is not being accepted. Instead of wisdom receiving a warm embrace, wisdom is being pushed away. Wisdom is calling but being rejected. She is calling but being mocked. Wisdom is

calling but being ridiculed and ignored. As a result, the people are being destroyed and worse, dying. So, how do we get people to tune their ear to wisdom's call? How do we reverse their desire to go their own way and instead live secure and at ease?

SANKOFA

Our history is filled with many stories of leaders who have risen out of the ashes to lead people into a better life. It usually starts with a traumatic event, which causes them to acquire a new, more liberating perspective, resulting in their desire to enlighten others of this alternative reality. Harriet Tubman was one such person. Because Ms. Tubman had experienced freedom, it was not enough. She wanted to bring others along the journey with her; but, many were apprehensive, the most apprehensive being Ms. Tubman's sister. Her sister was unable to see past her current reality. The cost seemed too high a price. She was complacent where she was because she felt it was safer. Her love for her children and fear

of her master caused her to reject Ms. Tubman's advice despite her experience and knowledge of a free life. Her sister chose not to listen; and, it ultimately cost her sister her life.

CASE STUDY

Though the actual details of Harriet Tubman's journeys are in question, they are not important. The fact that she was

able to save a group of enslaved Africans is. The number who were freed is not as important as is finding out why so many chose to stay. We acknowledge that many were never given the opportunity to escape to freedom; but, some were. The fact that the number of people Ms. Tubman freed was significantly lower than



So, how do we get people to tune their ear to wisdom's call?

the total number of those enslaved who might have had the option to escape says that there were those who were resistant to wisdom. They did not believe in what she was selling. Though Ms. Tubman had experienced a better life and had access to an alternate reality that allowed both black and white to walk and work side by side, so many turned a deaf ear. They

CLOSING DEVOTIONS**Lessons to Myself from My Younger and Older Self.**

We commonly hear of people writing lessons to their younger selves - warnings, things they wished they would have known, advice, etc. But, one thing we do not hear asked is for a person to recall lessons from their younger selves. We tend to think that we can only learn from our mature, educated, "been through

some things" self when the truth is, there is plenty we have forgotten. Sometimes, we need our younger self to recall and remind us.

For devotions this week, each person is challenged to go back and remember. Remember the person you used to be, the inhibitions and courage you used to have, and the value it brought to your life. It's time to learn from our younger selves, so we can teach our older selves, and influence others even more.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

June 1–June 7

Monday	Acts 6:1-7 (Faith Community Discerns Path of Wisdom)
Tuesday	2 Timothy 1:3-9a (Parents Joyfully Pass on the Faith)
Wednesday	Psalms 34:11-18 (Learning the Fear of the Lord)
Thursday	Matthew 26:47-52 (Violence Not a Wise Choice)
Friday	1 Kings 4:29-34 (Vast Scope of Solomon's Wisdom)
Saturday	Proverbs 4:1-9 (Prize Wisdom and Insight)
Sunday	Proverbs 1:1-4, 7-8, 10-11, 20-22, 32-33 (Godly Wisdom for Life's Decisions)