

# The Book of Proverbs

Godly Wisdom for Everyday Life

## SSBC Proverbs Bible Study # 17

*Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.*

### **A Portrait of the Wise**

Key Passage: Proverbs 19:2

Related Passages: Proverbs 14:15; 15:28; and  
18:17

Sermon Date: January 27th, 2008

### **The wise are thoughtful and discerning.**

Of these two ideas, the first is easier to understand. When I think about a “thoughtless “ person, I think first of what this means in social relationships. Picture someone self-centered and oblivious to the feelings of others. They often offend others—even sometimes without knowing it. By contrast, a “thoughtful person” is friendly and has a way of putting others at ease. They notice others’ feelings.

Thoughtfulness is not only seen in social matters, though. It also appears in the way someone works, plans, speaks, thinks and lives. It is a trait of the wise.

Discernment, though, is not such a familiar term. This English word comes from the ancient agricultural practice of sifting things out to separate them. A discerning person has the ability to tell things apart and notice distinctions. The wise need to sift out the bad from the good and the good from the best.

How can one gain discernment?

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the following charts to note your observations and any questions you have. The first verse below is the key verse for this study. Keeping this verse in mind, read each of the subsequent verses and note how each provides further insight into the meaning of this key verse.

Scripture	Your Observation & Questions
<p data-bbox="155 321 472 378"><b>Key Verse Proverbs 19:2</b> (NIV)</p> <p data-bbox="102 402 506 459">19:2 <b>It is not good to have zeal without knowledge,</b></p> <p data-bbox="102 553 495 610"><b>nor to be hasty and miss the way.</b></p> <hr data-bbox="102 634 501 638"/> <p data-bbox="102 911 464 967">14:15 <b>A simple man believes anything,</b></p> <p data-bbox="102 1117 491 1174"><b>but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.</b></p>	

Scripture	Your Observation & Questions
<p data-bbox="1150 297 1564 358">15:28 <b>The heart of the righteous weighs its answers,</b></p> <p data-bbox="1150 448 1491 505"><b>but the mouth of the wicked gushes evil.</b></p> <p data-bbox="1150 935 1520 997">18:17 <b>The first to present his case seems right,</b></p> <p data-bbox="1150 1114 1512 1170"><b>till another comes forward and questions him.</b></p>	

2. Next, use this chart to interpret some key observations.

a. From the chart on the previous pages, select a few of your observations & questions that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and then interpret and apply each of them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father,? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it Say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- ◆ **S**ins to avoid
- ◆ **P**romises to believe
- ◆ **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- ◆ **C**ommands to obey
- ◆ **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them — listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

4. The theme for this week's study is being "thoughtful and discerning". How would you describe a "thoughtful" person? What are their characteristics?
5. How would you describe a "discerning person"? What are the characteristics of a "discerning person"?
6. Considering Proverbs 15:28. What are some reasons why thoughtfulness might be connected with righteousness or why carelessness might be connected with wickedness?
7. Considering Proverbs 19:2, think of two or three practical situations where thoughtfulness and discernment would prove helpful.
8. Considering Proverbs 18:17, how might this verse show that a wise person is thoughtful and discerning?
9. How can a person become more discerning and thoughtful toward others? Consider Philippians 1:9-11, Philippians 2:3-4, I Corinthians 10:24, and Proverbs 18:15.
10. How can you apply what you have learned in this study to your life this week? Consider Proverbs 2:1-6.

**Memory Verse**

**Proverbs 14:15**

<sup>14:15</sup> **A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.**

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them! Psalm 139:17

Consider the greatest of all thoughtful acts: John 3:16 says: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

There can be no equal to this kind of thoughtfulness from our Lord God. Christ gave himself so that we would be declared free from sin and righteous with him in God's sight. God thought of us when we were not thinking of him. How can we not love him for this priceless gift of eternal life?

If you have not yet committed your life to following Jesus, take a moment right now to do so. Ask him to forgive you of your old selfish ways, to direct every area of your life as Lord and Master, and to renew you with his wisdom. Ask him to make you more thoughtful and loving toward those around you.

The Holy Spirit will shine light on your selfish thoughts and your carelessness. He will also shine his light on the Word of God so that you come to discern how desirable, pure and good are all the things God promises us there..

*These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>. Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact **studieditor@southshorebaptist.com***

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