

God's Agenda for Proverbs

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, good evening. Proverbs is an exciting book. It's exciting because right from the beginning we see that God has an exciting agenda for us. We are his masterpiece.
- ! Screwtape, the senior tempter in C.S. Lewis's The Screwtape Letter says that the church spread out through all time and space and rooted in eternity.
- Terrible as an army with banners. That, I confess, is a spectacle which makes our boldest tempters uneasy. God is recreating humanity, a new humanity, glorious and good and grand, row after row of little Christ, created to express God's glory forever, created to rule as kings and priests forever, created to be a worthy bride for his worthy son.
- That is what God is doing. That's God's masterpiece. But inside of that, we personally are God's workmanship, his masterpiece created in Christ Jesus.
- And Proverbs is exciting because of what God is accomplishing through this book, what his agenda is.
- [1 : 3 2] In the book of Proverbs, he says he wants to set a garland of grace. That is a victor's crown of beauty and grace on your head.
- He wants to make you beautiful like Lady Wisdom herself, classy and strong and kind and shrewd, to make you as wise as all of those characters that you love.
- In a word, to be like Jesus, ready to take your place next to him and rule forever.
- Now, can you become more like that now? The answer, the undoubtable answer of Proverbs is yes, that's God's agenda.
- That's what he's working towards to make you a masterpiece. Something that makes you, that makes observers stand back and impressed.
- [2 : 4 2] But I have to tell you, I have to tell you and I have to accept this for myself. Becoming a masterpiece is, it's not easy.
- It's not easy for the artist and neither is it easy for the piece of art. It's not going to be easy to be a masterpiece, to become a masterpiece.
- Proverbs is very clear. If you're not ready for pain, for effort, for humility, you're not ready for wisdom.
- If you aren't ready for the chisel, you are not ready to become Michelangelo's David. Just think of that great slab of Italian marble was having a lovely time in the quarry, minding its own business, when all of a sudden it was hacked out and cut up and scraped and beaten and great chunks of it fell off and fell away.
- That's the price of becoming David. You're not a Plato version of Michelangelo's David done in a few moments to amuse a child.
- [4 : 0 2] You know how you would do it. You'd just make a little man out of Plato done in a couple of moments. And it's good enough for what it is. No time, no effort, and it's not worth very much either.
- But that's not what you are. Back when I worked at 84 Lumber, we used to mull windows together. That is, put windows together.

And sometimes it was good enough. It wasn't perfect. It was just good enough. And the guy doing it would say, well, you can't see it from my house.

You can't see it from my house. But you know, you, Christian, are going into God's house as a pillar in the house of God.

And that means, that's going to mean pain. Pain for him and pain for you to become what God has planned for you.

[5 : 02] C.S. Lewis said, One can imagine a sentient, alive, a knowing picture. And after being rubbed and scraped and recommenced for the tenth time, this picture, you can imagine wishing that it were just a thumbnail sketch whose making was over in a minute.

In the same way, it is natural for us to wish that God had designed us, designed for us, a less glorious and less arduous destiny.

So we, it can be so difficult. Sometimes we just wish God had something less planned for us. But then we are wishing not for more love, but for less.

What's behind all of God's effort? What's behind all this pushing and pulling, this humbling, this scraping, these warnings, this rebukes?

Why does the book of Proverbs demand so much from us? The answer is love. Your life matters to God.

[6 : 21] What you're becoming matters to Him. And that's what's so exciting about the book of Proverbs.

It's not promising something easy, but it is promising something glorious. It's not going to be easy, but it's going to be worth it. And so I hope you're ready to dive in to the book of Proverbs.

Let me just read the first seven verses. And after that, I'll pray. Proverbs chapter one, the Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel.

For attaining wisdom and discipline, for understanding words of insight, for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair, for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young.

Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance. For understanding Proverbs and parables, the sayings and the riddles of the wise.

[7 : 41] The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we stand here on the front step of this book of Proverbs, and we are expectant.

We are eager to see what we are going to find here in this book. We need real practical help for everyday decisions. We need real practical help for becoming the kind of people that you are wanting to make us into these masterpieces.

And to think of how far you've gone, all of the arduous steps you have taken to take us out of sin and darkness, to take us out of depravity and brokenness, and to give us this wonderful and glorious destiny, to change us from what we are not to what we are going to be.

It makes us hopeful. It makes us expectant and eager as we begin. And so please bless the preaching of this word. Even though we are not in person, please bless me as I preach, and please bless those who are at home, who are listening now.

[9 : 07] Holy Spirit, come and put these things into our hearts, and do us good, and change us more into Jesus-likeness.

I pray this all for His sake. He is worthy. He is worthy of all of our lives. And so give us a heart that would give Him all that we have.

In Jesus' name I do pray. Amen. Amen. Well, you saw it again and again, just from what I read. What is, what's God's agenda? You see it in all of these, it's for this, and it's for that.

What is Proverbs 4? What's God's agenda? Well, to put it simply, it's to make you, to make you wise. All of these words, all these words piled up, it is wisdom drawn out.

There are different aspects, different ingredients of wisdom. What is wisdom? Let's just start with a definition, and let me give you my definition, and then we'll flush that out.

[10 : 13] What's wisdom? Wisdom is understanding the fabric of God's world and living in harmony with it, but also knowing you'll never completely understand it.

What's wisdom? It's understanding the fabric of God's world and living in harmony with it, but also knowing you'll never completely understand it.

You see there at the end of verse six, there's still riddles of the wise. There are still things, and you see them coming up every now and then in the book of Proverbs, things that seem contradictory, truths that are hard to connect.

There are these riddles that make even wise men say, hmm, I don't know. I don't understand. I don't know what's going on here.

This is beyond me. This is above my pay grade. Proverbs ends, and I think chapter 30, with Agur saying, I'm the most foolish of men.

[11 : 30] I don't understand anything. And there is a spirit of that in the whole book of Proverbs, and especially in the book of Job or Ecclesiastes, that we understand that we can know some, but we're never going to know it all.

But wisdom, and we're going to spend most of the time talking about the positive aspects of this, that wisdom is understanding the fabric of God's world and living in harmony with it.

So wisdom really comes down to three basic truths, three basic things that you need to know in order to be wise or things you need to do.

Wisdom is, one, knowing what things are, knowing and understanding, seeing things for what they are. It's seeing truth.

It's having an accurate understanding and knowledge of who I am, of who God is, of the world and people and others.

[12 : 36] So verse two, for understanding words of insight. That word insight, it's talking about seeing things as they are. Not what I want them to be, not what other people are telling me, not lies or mirages, but what they are.

Wisdom is seeing. This is God's world. He made it. And he made it in a particular way.

All of it. The social, the physical, the spiritual, humanity, creation, finances, relationships, my relationship to the Lord, my relationship to my friends and my spouse, my husband, my wife, my children, all of these things, God has created this reality.

And so you have to see what is actually there. Fool, fools don't see reality accurately. And in the place of truth, they put lies.

But if you're going to have wisdom, you have to see past the lies, past the mirages of the truth, the appearances of the truth, to see actually what is true. That means if you're going to be wise, you have to learn and you have to observe.

[13 : 54] You have to know. But wisdom is, is, is certainly more than seeing things as they are. God didn't make things stationary. God didn't make things.

So they're isolated. Uh, things are, so they're just there. Immobile, unconnected, disconnected from everything else.

No, there are processes. There are relationships. There's cause and effects. Um, there's actions and there's reactions and there's sowing followed by reaping and all sorts of things in the world.

And wisdom is seen how things work, how they connect, cause and effect. Fools expect to have one thing happen or to do one thing.

And hopefully to have something else happen. They, they plant wheat and they hope they'll get corn. And they're surprised when wheat comes up, but the wise person sees how things are related.

[15 : 05] They see the, the power, the problems, uh, of what, what am I, what am I going to do? And how's that going to turn out now? So here's this picture of this world.

It's good. God made it. And it's orderly. It's not chaotic. It's not chaotic. In Proverbs eight wisdom is pictured as rejoicing with God, as he created the world, a singing and praise and adoration for everything.

And, and how God made everything. And I don't think we really can, we, we really appreciate how revolutionary and how powerful that idea is that this world, the physical world, the spiritual world, God created it.

And it's orderly. And it's good. God made it. I don't think we understand how revolutionary that is. Um, in the East and the far East and China and, and places like that, Japan, places like that.

the spiritual is, is primary. Uh, the created world is either an illusion or it's secondary.

[16 : 22] secondary. It's a secondary of importance. There's really nothing to learn in the physical created world. No, instead you have to have some sort of mystical insights.

You have to have some sort of spiritual magic to see what is real. And what is real is, is something beyond, uh, what God has made.

And really that is why, uh, the East does not have a robust, um, wisdom or philosophical tradition. They have mystics and they have gods and they have goddesses by the hundreds and the thousands and, and in Hinduism by the millions.

And they have powers and forces. They have yin and yang and, and things like that, but they don't have dirt under your finger, sort of wisdom.

And that's in the far, that's in the East. Now in the West, in our tradition, uh, in all of our thinking, uh, creation comes out of chaos.

[17 : 27] It comes out of conflict. It comes out of power, a power struggle. And so just in, in the old Norse mythology, how did the world get created?

Well, there was a fight and there was a battle. And in the first great giant was killed. And someone came along and, and made the earth out of his bones. in, in Greek mythology, in Greek mythology, it's Zeus killing his father.

And then there's a battle between the Titans and the Olympian gods and it's conflict. So in every Western mythology, every Western tradition, what's at the heart of things, not order, but conflict and chaos and power and dominance, the strong conquering the weak.

And that's why evolutionary theory is so appealing. It's just a scientific version of that. There's no real wisdom out there.

There's no real order out there. There's no real beauty out there. Things just happen. It's all random chance. Things appear orderly. They appear designed.

[18 : 45] And, and evolutionary textbooks will talk about, well, how do you deal with the appearance of design, but it's not really designed. It's only in the Bible that what is out there in the way the world works spiritually, physically, in every way is orderly.

And it works in its cause and effect. And you sow what you reap and you reap what you sow. And that's why when Jesus was teaching, he could go out into the physical world.

He could go out in the relationships of the world and he could do that because it's good. And it's true. And it's orderly. Things work in a certain way.

There is a fabric to reality. And God made it. And so what is wisdom? Wisdom is understanding the fabric of God's creation.

What's there and how it works. And so in our text, those are the words like prudence and insight and knowledge.

[20 : 00] But wisdom is more than that. It's living in harmony with the fabric, not against the grain.

You're not cutting against the grain, but you're living with it in the same direction. Instead of swimming upstream, you swim downstream.

You go with the current. And that's the word discipline. Fools despise discipline. Well, what is discipline?

The Hebrew word for discipline basically means to, to bring under, to put yourself under, to, to bring your life into conformity with reality.

reality. And that's what fools don't want to do. They might know what is true, but they despise putting themselves under it. And so you bring your life under the truth of who God is, who I am, how, how the world works.

[21 : 12] You don't fight against it. You don't wish it was otherwise. You submit yourself to it. And so wisdom is knowledge supremely harnessed.

So, you know, a horse, a thoroughbred can have miles of talents, but if it won't be controlled, it will never win.

a secretary, it was a magnificent creature, but if he, but he knew how to run with a jockey and a saddle on him.

And that's why we remember him. Because he didn't just have talent. He had talent and he had knowledge supremely harnessed.

And so you could read the music on the page, but it's only when you play the music on the page, that life becomes beautiful.

[22 : 22] When you become something better, something more Christ-like, something more successful, as God terms it, something, someone godly or more substantial in the world, that is wisdom.

It's seeing that fabric and understanding that God, the Lord touches everything and everything is connected. And he's made the world a certain way.

And then I live in conformity. I live in harmony with that. So that's all, that's all abstract. And that's a lot of words.

And so I want to give you some examples. Let me show you how this works and what this is in real life. And I hope to give you these pictures and so that you can see, you can begin to see and apply it to your life, to your teenager's life, to help them to see, well, this is how it works.

And this is what wisdom is. So let me give you some examples. And first, let's talk about paper airplanes. Paper airplanes. I'm pretty sure I can make and fly a better paper airplane, a paper airplane that flies farther than most first graders.

[23 : 35] Not all of them, probably, but most of them. Most of them. Because I have some rudimentary knowledge of aerodynamics.

Not a lot, but I have a little. And I understand something of the fabric of God's world. He has made it so that certain shapes and certain things fly better than others.

And so I understand a little bit of that. Now, and so my little buddy, he can throw his airplane and it will actually either go one foot, a two foot, or it will actually go up and then turn around and go backwards.

I happen to have flown at paper airplanes with a certain boy and his three combined throws went, netted him, negative six feet. He threw it and every time it went backwards.

He's cute and he's all right in my book so I don't hold this against him. But he doesn't understand, he doesn't get that in this world there's a certain way that things work and a certain way that things don't work.

[24 : 54] It doesn't matter how you feel about it. It doesn't matter what you think your airplane should do. Reality isn't going to bend. You have to bend to it.

Now, there's nothing righteous or sinful about any of that. It's just not wise. Now, so there I am. I'm probably a better paper airplane thrower than the majority of first graders.

As wonderful and amazing as that is. But I'm an absolute chimpanzee in the paper airplane business when compared to John Collins. He's the world paper airplane distance record holder.

He's designed an airplane that went 226 feet. A single sheet of paper. He folded it up and it was thrown 226 feet.

Now, is he stronger than me? No, he's not. I've seen him and I have no doubt I could beat him in an arm wrestling contest. But here is the important thing.

[26 : 00] Wisdom is better than strength. And he has paper airplane wisdom by the barrels full. He has studied aerodynamics.

He's studied biological flight, how birds fly. He understands trailing edge and boundary layers and drag and lift.

He knows about air pressure. He sees, he knows the fabric of God's world in a way that I never will. I never will see except for maybe, hopefully in heaven, what he sees.

And he gets how things work. But what about execution? Well, he doesn't throw his own airplanes.

He's no dummy. I told you he has wisdom by the barrels full. He hires an arena football quarterback.

[27 : 03] You know, he has someone with a really good arm who can throw things really far. And he hires that guy to practice throwing airplanes. And he practices and he practices and practices.

And then when that guy has the practice and he's practiced a long time, then it's time for the world record attempt. John doesn't have any grand delusions about throwing this paper airplane himself.

He has disciplined himself to reality. So he knows what things are. He knows how things work. And he lives and he works and he operates in harmony with it.

And that's why, you know, this 55-year-old-ish kind of pudgy guy owns the record. It's wisdom. It's wisdom.

Wisdom is skillful living. Psalm 107 talks about sailors out on the sea. And a huge storm comes up.

[28 : 10] And the NIV says they were at their wit's end. It literally means they came to the end of their wisdom. They knew that they all their wisdom wasn't enough.

The storm was so big. So how do sailors sail? Well, they know how to read wind and currents. They know what to do with all these ropes and rigs and sails.

They know how to go skimming across the water on a box made out of wood. That's wisdom. I don't have.

They have that kind of wisdom. But wisdom is not just physical. Wisdom is about relationships. It's about spiritual realities, too.

Verse 3 says, it's for doing what is right and just and fair. Those words bring to mind, I think it's Zechariah, where the Lord says, I'm going to drop a plumb line, something that is right and straight, and I'm going to judge Israel by that.

[29 : 21] Wisdom is living a straight life that goes the way it's supposed to go. So there's not just a physical fabric.

There is a spiritual fabric. There is a spiritual fabric. And so you can be the smartest architect, mechanical engineer in the world and be an absolute fool when it comes to understanding the spiritual, relational fabric of reality, the human, the religious fabric of God's world.

so you could build a skyscraper and at the same time tear down your own life.

So here's Abigail. Another example. She was married to Nabal. His name means fool and he fits his name. He is a fool. And David has been living, King David, not yet King David, but David has been living in his area.

And David respectfully, very humbly, asks Nabal, you know, we've been keeping an eye on your shepherds. Your shepherds and your sheep have been living with us and we have done nothing but right by you.

[30 : 41] And we could use anything that you could give us. David didn't say, didn't say, this is how much you should give us. You owe us this or anything. He said, you know, we really could use whatever help you could give us.

We need food for our young men. Nabal's a response. Who is this David? Who is the son of Jesse?

He's just a runaway servant. Why should I give him anything? So who is this David? Does Nabal know who he's dealing with?

Does Nabal know what he's dealing with? What's going on here? Nabal has no idea of the truth. He doesn't have a measure of David.

He doesn't understand what he's dealing with. David isn't some chump. He has blood on his hands. That's the reason he couldn't build the temple.

[31 : 43] He's been living in the wild for years with disaffected men, with men who, you know, they were on the outs with society.

And they were used to fighting. And they were used to surviving in hard circumstances. And who is Nabal? Nabal's soft, rich, jerk who thinks he's more than who he is and what he is.

He doesn't see how things really stand. He doesn't really understand David. He doesn't understand himself. He doesn't understand how this is going to work out. And now David, here's the answer.

Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Like, why should I give him anything? And David's response was, men, put on your swords. And 400 bloody men are going to visit Nabal.

And what he wasn't going to give, they are going to take. And you better believe it, Nabal is not going to make it out of this situation alive. But did Nabal see and understand any of that?

[32 : 51] No, that's, he's so oblivious to reality. And that's why when Abigail tells him what happened, and Abigail saved his life, he fell over dead from shock and fear.

He is so, Nabal is so stupidly oblivious to what is going on and what to do about it. But Abigail, Abigail, she, she saw it all.

And she knew exactly what kind of man David was. She had his measure. She had him figured out. She knew two things. He isn't someone you can trifle with insults.

But he's also someone who you could appeal to. She had him figured out. She saw David.

She comprehended. She knew him. And she knew exactly what to say and how to say it. And that's wisdom. Understanding and seeing people.

[34 : 08] Understanding personalities. And understanding what to do with them. How to handle those situations and those people.

How things work. That's wisdom. And what a woman. So, so do you want to be an Abigail?

Or do you want to be a Nabal? I want to be an Abigail. And that's, that's the Lord's agenda for the book of Proverbs. To make us less like Nabal, less stupidly oblivious to what the world is and who God is and who I am and how things work and more like Abigail who understands and knows what to do.

There's Abigail. Here's Absalom. Absalom is having a bad day. He's having a bad day.

He's up in a tree hanging by his hair thinking, where did things go wrong? What, where did I go wrong?

[35 : 19] What happened here? I mean, this is the beginning of a comic, comedy movie. What's going on here? And his hair's hanging, he's hanging by his hair from this tree and he's thinking to himself, you know, I was popular, check, I had followers, check, I had strength, check, I was this close to the throne, where did things go so wrong?

Where did things go so wrong for me? And you know, meanwhile, the vultures are probably circling overhead and men are riding up on horses. Men with spears, men ready to deal with Absalom.

Where did things go so wrong for Absalom? You remember, he had driven out his father David. David was on the run and Absalom was gaining support and Absalom's most important supporter was Ahithophel.

And Ahithophel was David's wisest and best counselor and he had joined himself to Absalom. And so Ahithophel was his greatest asset because he was wise.

How wise was he? Well, every word Ahithophel spoke seemed as wise as though it had come directly from the mouth of God. Ahithophel. And that made David afraid.

[36 : 56] You know how you stay up at night thinking about things? Ahithophel was someone that David stayed up thinking about afraid. And David prayed, Lord, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness because David knew the power and the danger of wisdom when it's wielded against you.

So David's out on the run and you wonder what you can do and how he can handle this. And he knew the only way that he is going to make it out of this situation alive is someone has to overturn Ahithophel's advice.

And so he sends his friend and his counselor Hushai to pretend to be on Absalom's side. But he's really there. Like a good spy book, a spy movie, he's really there to frustrate Ahithophel's counsel.

This is the only chance David has if somehow Absalom will listen to Hushai instead of to Ahithophel. Now David's on the run.

And the question before Absalom is attack now or wait? Attack now or wait? What should we do? Ahithophel said, attack now.

- [38 : 19] Choose 12,000 men. That's more than enough. Choose 12,000 men and go tonight. David's weary and he's weak. Strike him now and everyone will leave him.
- Everyone will abandon him. If you leave him alone, he'll gather followers and this coup, it's over. If he can gather followers.
- So that's Ahithophel's advice. And remember his word is like so wise that it's like God telling you what to do. But Hushai said, no, no, no, no, no.
- Absalom, the people love you. They love you. You've got nothing to worry about them joining David. David, the longer you wait, the more people that are going to come after you and follow you.
- They'll join you. And besides, if you think about it, David's a mighty warrior. We already talked about David being a mighty warrior. David's a mighty warrior. You're not strong enough to face him yet.
- [39 : 23] See, if you go into battle now and you lose somehow, well, everything's over. Everyone will abandon you. So just wait a while. wait a while.
- So what to do? What do you do? Well, how did Absalom get stuck in a tree hanging by his hair saying, how did everything go so wrong so quickly?
- Well, Absalom chose wrong. Absalom was a fool. See, Absalom didn't see things as they were.
- And he thought too much of himself. Hushai flattered him. He said, the people love you.
- And the flatterer was spreading his net. And that's why flattery is so dangerous, because it appeals to us. And it was so appealing to Absalom's ego.
- [40 : 34] He liked it and he thought too much of himself. But strangely enough, Absalom also thought too little of his own strength. He was strong enough to kill David.
- Ahithophel knew that. He had enough men. But Absalom wasn't confident in his strength. He overestimated himself on one hand, and he underestimated himself on the other.
- And once you see that, you can start seeing those two things, where people overestimate themselves and underestimate themselves. At the same time, you'll start seeing it a lot in people's lives.
- You'll start to see that, wow, that's at the center of a lot of foolishness. It's really near the heart of foolishness so much of having to overinflate a view of yourself.
- That's talking about the opposite of humility that we're talking about on Sunday morning. But Absalom wasn't seeing himself. He wasn't understanding the situation clearly, and so he didn't do the right thing.
- [41 : 46] Ahithophel, on the other hand, saw everything clearly. He knew David. he knew Absalom. He knew how this was going to end.
- So after Absalom said, yeah, okay, we need to wait, we'll wait. I don't have to felt. He said, all right, guys, goodbye. See you later.
- See you. I'm just going down to, you know, I have to go make a visit to my hometown, and he got up on his donkey, and he walked through his gate, or rode through his gate.
- He went into his office, and he went through his files, and pulled out his will, and he filled it in and signed it out.
- He talked to his servants, gave him some last orders, shut the door, and he hung himself. One dumb, foolish decision.
- [43 : 04] That's how Absalom ended up hanging from a tree. He was killed by his own great folly, overestimating himself, underestimating himself.

So what's God's agenda for the book of Proverbs? It's to make us more like Abigail, and less like Absalom. To make us to be bold, to be wise, to be courageous sailors on the sea of life.

To live this life, yes. But to attune us, to tune us to the kingdom of God, to prepare us for the goodness and the glory of God's kingdom.

And where does all this begin? Well, it's the fear of the Lord, and we're going to talk about that next week, Lord willing.

Where does it begin for us, living on this side of the coming of the Lord? Well, it begins with coming to Jesus.

[44 : 32] This is God's world. So how do I stand in relation to the creator? If I have eyes to see, if I have any measure of insight, my standing is not good.

It's not good between the creator and me. And if I have any measure of insight and honesty and humility, I can see that there is something wrong broken and broken and bent.

There's something rebellious in me. Something that the fabric of how God's world is and who God is and I just push against it.

I don't like it. And so sin is shooting straight across the spiritual fabric of this world. And that's why sin eventually is the stupidest of things.

It never ever works. And it is like a sad, tragic, explosive boomerang. I throw it out hoping it will go away and accomplish something for me and it comes back and it always hits me.

[45 : 51] Because sin is contrary to the fabric of God's world. And that's why in the first nine chapters of Proverbs and then the next seven chapters after that, so Proverbs 1 through like 16, there is a huge emphasis on living righteously.

righteousness is wisdom. Sin is folly. Because sin is so stupid. It is so self-destructive.

But if I have insight, I see that that's me. That's where I am. That's what I'm full of. And wisdom is seeing that.

And I need, I can't save myself. I'm too far gone. I am the problem. I can't be my own solution. So I need a savior to make me right, to get me right, to give me, not just my record in heaven, but my heart, my mind, my character, to give me wisdom, to pin me back into harmony with the fabric of how God made the world.

And so I'm not fighting against everything. I think there was some Puritan that said one time that when you're outside of Christ, every single thing in the world is an enemy to you.

[47 : 29] Every rock on the ground, every tree is your enemy. Because you're fighting against everything that God has made. And so there I am, I'm all bent wrong ways, shooting across the fabric, and Jesus takes me and bends me back.

Jesus saved me from my folly. So if you haven't come to Jesus humbly begging for salvation, then you aren't seeing God.

You're not dealing with the God of this that you have to deal with, the God that is there. You're not seeing the world the right way. You aren't seeing how this works. You haven't bent yourself or put yourself under him, and so you're still fighting.

You need to put yourself into the yoke with Jesus. And when you do that, that's when God begins this rebuilding project.

God is remaking humanity. He's making men and women glorious and good again. He is going to crown mankind again with a crown of splendor, and that is what you are missing.

[48 : 49] And so come to him. Come to Jesus, who is wisdom. That's the starting place. That's how you get onto the step one of God's agenda for you in Proverbs.

You'll never get anywhere in this book. You'll never understand it. You'll never accomplish any part of it until you come to the person who this book is all about.

And it's Jesus who has become for us wisdom from God. So come to him. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we are so willful and so stubborn in our pride.

We can be so blind to ourselves and to you and to others and so such naeballs oblivious to reality and yet so stubborn and willful.

So we pray that you would save us from ourselves. Please help us to embrace humility, to embrace Jesus Christ as our Savior and to put him on and to submit ourselves to him, to live in him and through him and for him, that we might reflect his beauty and his wisdom and his grace and his splendor into a dying and dark world that we would shine as stars in the night sky.

[50 : 29] Pray this for Jesus sake. Amen. Amen. Amen.