

A large, intricate black and white decorative scrollwork element on the left side of the cover, featuring acanthus leaves and swirling flourishes.

Think on These Things

WISDOM
FOR LIFE
FROM
*P*ROVERBS

RAY COMFORT

BroadStreet
P U B L I S H I N G

BroadStreet Publishing Group, LLC
Racine, Wisconsin, USA
BroadStreetPublishing.com

Think on These Things: WISDOM FOR LIFE FROM PROVERBS

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ISBN-13: 978-1-4245-5514-7 (hardcover)

ISBN-13: 978-1-4245-5515-4 (e-book)

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Cover design by Chris Garborg/garborgdesign.com
Typeset by Katherine Lloyd/theDESKonline.com

Printed in China

17 18 19 20 21 5 4 3 2 1

Moving Toward Wisdom

*H*ave you ever done something stupid and then regretted it? If you had put the book of Proverbs into action, it may not have happened. If you have wisdom, you will never do anything stupid. Proverbs has wisdom on friendships, work, sex, marriage, greed, lust, pride, and a hundred other pain-invoking issues.

The book of Proverbs is filled with wonderful wisdom for daily living—wisdom that can save the obedient ear much pain. While open-air preaching, I have often saved myself from being hit by remembering that a soft answer turns away wrath, or by greeting people gently early in the morning. So in the following pages I have chosen a proverb for each day of the calendar year, and along with it share a few words of application.

God gave us an Instruction Book for life. The world thinks it knows better, but like a climbing toddler, it finds out the hard way that life gives bruises. Pain becomes the teacher. Today's news reveals the hurts and tragic deaths of a world that ignores the Bible.

This greatest-of-all, most-hated-and-most-loved Book has been esteemed by kings, queens, and presidents. Within this divine collection of sixty-six books are the power-packed, pain-saving proverbs—a collection of the wisdom of God telling us how to deal with the problems, pitfalls, and pleasures of life. May God give you His wisdom from above as you read.



January

January 2

WHAT MATTERS MORE THAN HAPPINESS

Treasures of wickedness profit nothing,
but righteousness delivers from death.

—PROVERBS 10:2

*W*hat is it that you think matters most to God? I believe it is righteousness. We tend to esteem happiness as our highest ideal, and we say that it's the right of every American to pursue it. But righteousness is what we should first pursue.

I'm sure a bag full of stolen money would make a thief happy. But whether something is right should always trump whether or not it makes us happy. Most of this sinful world has no real hunger for righteousness, but it will be the only thing that matters on the day of wrath. That's when people will see that the righteousness that delivers from death is only found in Jesus Christ. I pray they will see it before that day.

SOUL SEARCH: At what times in my life has happiness meant more to me than righteousness?



**Father, please help me to always put what
is right above my personal happiness. Amen.**

January 4

THE MOST PRECIOUS COMMODITY

He becomes poor that deals with a slack hand,
but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

—PROVERBS 10:4

God forbid that we would ever deal with a slack hand. Instead, we must take a firm grip on life, realize how precious it is, and use every moment as a man in a desert uses every drop of his life-giving water.

Time is our most precious substance, so use it with the utmost diligence. Today, use it to further what is eternal. Just how can you practically do that?

Discipline yourself to read and meditate on the Word daily. Set aside time each day to pray for the lost and other needs. Walk in the fear of the Lord, always having awareness of His presence and seeking His smile above all else. That means you will guard your thought life, and will always be on the lookout to share the gospel with a dying world, either by gospel tract or verbal witness.

SOUL SEARCH: When have I been guilty of wasting precious time in this life God has given me?



**Father, help me to spend my precious time wisely today.
Amen.**

January 5

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TODAY

He who gathers in summer is a wise son;
he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame.

—PROVERBS 10:5

How we should take advantage of the freedom to enter the harvest fields and reach the lost!

Imagine if, in years to come, it became illegal to give someone a gospel tract or to preach in public places. It is then that we will look back to these days of freedom and say that we should have been wise and gathered in summer. How shameful if we close our eyes and take rest when sinners are sinking into hell.

The Bible says that those who win souls are wise (Proverbs 11:30). So let's be wise today, and seek and save those who are lost.

SOUL SEARCH: How can reaching the lost—obedience to the Great Commission—be a priority in my life?



**Father, please help me to take advantage of today
so I will have no regrets tomorrow. Amen.**

January 6

WHAT WE WEAR ON OUR HEADS

Blessings are upon the head of the just,
but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

—PROVERBS 10:6

*J*ust isn't a word commonly used in the world, but the Bible uses it regularly to describe the godly. The entire human race is made up of only two sets of people—the just and the unjust.

The just are those who have partaken of the grace of God in Christ. They have been justified, made as though they never sinned in the first place. Jesus said of the religious leaders of His time, “You are those who justify yourselves before men” (Luke 16:15). That’s all religion can do. It can’t justify us before God.

How incredible that in Christ we are righteous in the sight of our Creator—and that on the day of judgment, instead of coming under God’s wrath for our sins, we can instead hear Him say, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:21). Blessings are on the head of the just.

SOUL SEARCH: Considering how I have spent my life, in what ways would God be justified in saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant”?



**Father, help me to fully understand the incredible blessing
and reprieve of being justified by faith. Amen.**

January 8

THE WISE MASTER BUILDER

The wise in heart will receive commandments,
but a prating fool will fall.

—PROVERBS 10:8

It's refreshing to witness to someone who has a humble heart. Humility is the light by which sinners see the cross. The wise in heart will receive commandments, and God commands all people everywhere to repent.

As Christians, we are tuned to the will of God. Our obedience is evidence of our love for the Lord. And we are wise to always look for His smile, because in our obedience we are building our house upon the rock. When the storms of life come, we will stand strong because of our unshakable foundation.

SOUL SEARCH: In my life, what times of disobedience have I left unconfessed? How can I strengthen my foundation through obedience to God's commands?

*Father, help me today to have a
joyfully obedient heart to seek your smile. Amen.*

January 11

WORDS FROM THE WELL

The mouth of the righteous is a well of life,
but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

—PROVERBS 10:11

Life and death are certainly in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21). Negative words can bring us down, and encouraging words can lift us up.

However, because we are made righteous in Christ, when we use our mouths to share the gospel with the unsaved, we speak more than words of encouragement. They are words of life, drawn from the wells of salvation. So never tire of sharing the gospel. Your words, when used by God, are like life-giving water to a dying man.

SOUL SEARCH: When have I avoided sharing the gospel with others because of my pride or my fear?



**Father, give me the opportunity to overcome
my fears and share words of life today. Amen.**

April



April 1

THE FATHER'S INSTRUCTIONS

A wise son heeds his father's instruction,
but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

—PROVERBS 13:1

A wise son heeds his Father's instructions in Christ. He builds his house upon a rock, and when the storms of life come, he doesn't fall. He has God's word on that.

Being a Christian means to have an ear that is ready and eager to hear the voice of God. And we hear Him through His Word. If we are guided by the voice of our conscience, it will never go against the Bible. So let the Scriptures comfort you, guide you, feed you, encourage you, and even rebuke you. In doing so, you are heeding your Father's instructions.

SOUL SEARCH: What percentage of my decisions are made with the guidance of the Word of God? For what decision do I want God's instruction today?



**Father, may I be ever mindful of instruction
from the Scriptures. Amen.**

April 3

GOSSIP OR GOSPEL

He who guards his mouth preserves his life,
but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

—PROVERBS 13:3

*C*ontrol your mouth and you will control your life. Lose control and it may destroy you.

Our words can encourage or discourage, speak of gossip or the gospel, tell the truth or lies, or spread love or hate. The mouth not only makes or breaks human relationships, but it also plays a part in our relationship with God. Jesus said it reveals the abundance of the heart (Luke 6:45). With it we can deny the Lord or confess Him before others (Luke 12:8; Matthew 10:32). If we confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved (Romans 10:9).

May our mouths be an instrument that speaks of the love of God so evidently manifest on Calvary's cross.

SOUL SEARCH: What past broken relationship have I never tried to repair? What steps could I take to mend that relationship?



**Father, may I strive to glorify you with
my thoughts today. Amen.**

April 5

WHAT GRABS OUR AFFECTIONS?

A righteous man hates lying,
but a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame.

—PROVERBS 13:5

There's only one who can rightly wear the title "righteous man." But, by the grace of God, all who repent and trust in Him are, in a moment of time, clothed with His righteousness.

The evidence of this is that we will love the things that God loves and hate the things that God hates. However, we shouldn't primarily hate lying because of what it does (destroys trust that binds relationships and usually leaves behind it a trail of destruction). Our hatred of it should rather be because lying is morally wrong. That's why it's offensive to God.

SOUL SEARCH: Do I really hate sin? How is this proven by my life?



**Father, give me power this day to love the things
you love and to hate the things you hate. Amen.**

April 12

THE TREE OF LIFE

Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.

—PROVERBS 13:12

During the production of a documentary back in 1980, my cameraman captured footage of a violent gang fight. It was immediately seized by police to be used as court evidence. With permission from the police, we included the footage in the movie, but we had to wait for the trial to be over before we could release the movie. Every time I had a release date, the trial date was deferred and my hopes were dashed. Bills mounted up and I was put in a difficult financial position. My heart was sick.

The case finally went to court and we were legally able to release the film, and 2,300 people showed up to the premiere. That which made my heart sick became a tree of life.

We have a hope that is never deferred. It is both sure and steadfast. We are awaiting the sound of the trumpet, and when that desire comes, we will most certainly have the tree of life.

SOUL SEARCH: How much do I appreciate the hope in Christ set before me?



**Father, never let me lose sight of the glorious
hope that awaits me. Amen.**

April 17

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

A wicked messenger falls into trouble,
but a faithful ambassador brings health.

—PROVERBS 13:17

We are called to be faithful ambassadors for Christ in a hostile and godless world. We are the representatives of a heavenly country in which dwells righteousness.

To be faithful to the message is not only to be faithful to God, but also to dying humanity. While the world would have us compromise on issues like sin, the holiness of God, and the exclusivity of Christ, we will not—because to do so would be to their eternal detriment. Those wolves in sheep's clothing who do compromise are wicked messengers who fall into the worst of mischief.

May we, in contrast, live to hear the words “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:23).

SOUL SEARCH: Do I know the Scriptures well enough to recognize unsound doctrine? What unsound doctrines are most common in today's world?



Father, keep my doctrine sound. Amen.



November

November 1

THE COMPLEX EYE

A king who sits on the throne of judgment
scatters all evil with his eyes.

—PROVERBS 20:8

The human eye is an unspeakably complex marvel that we rarely give a second thought. But in reality, it is a reflection of the utter genius of God. How could He make such a thing? How does His hand fashion an eye, let alone a matching pair that can see and communicate images to the brain? The eye has 137 million light-sensitive cells, and focusing muscles that move an estimated one hundred thousand times a day. Modern science has discovered that the instructions for how each eye was to be made was in our DNA from the moment we were conceived.*

Our eyes are also windows of the soul. They can instantly change to express joy, fear, evil, kindness, love, and pain, and with the right look we can even scatter all evil. Such thoughts are too high for us to comprehend, and no words can express worthy praise to God for His wonderful works.

SOUL SEARCH: When was the last time I was brought to a silent worship as I mediated on the power of God?



**Father, I am awestruck by the greatness of your power,
and humbled by your love. Amen.**

* “Rod,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/science/rod-retinal-cell>; “40 Astounding Facts You Should Know About Your Amazing Human Body,” Distractify, <http://distractify.com/old-school/2014/07/20/amazing-facts-about-the-human-body-1197776387>.

November 18

OUR INSTRUCTIONS

It is a snare for a man to devote rashly something as holy,
and afterward to reconsider his vows.

—PROVERBS 20:25

Skeptics often point to terrible violence or sinful sexual behavior in the Bible. They will say that Lot offered his daughters to homosexuals in Sodom, as if the Bible is saying it was the right thing to do. But what they don't seem to know is that the Scriptures were written for our instruction. What Lot did was wrong, and it was stupid. Lesson there.

A classic example of a rash vow was Jephthah's promise to sacrifice to the Lord whatever came out of his house to meet him on his return from a battle (Judges 11:30–35). That was also really stupid; it was an example of what not to do.

It's best not to make any vows to God. Don't offer Him something if He will do something for you. Instead, keep your lips together and trust Him with your future, and whatever happens, you have His promise that it will be for your good. He knows what's best for us.

SOUL SEARCH: What is one mistake that I've learned from? Am I instructed by the mistakes of others?



**Father, instruct and guide me, in your
great faithfulness. Amen.**

November 19

THE DAY IS COMING

A wise king sifts out the wicked,
and brings the threshing wheel over them.

—PROVERBS 20:26

The threshing wheel is what separates the wheat from the chaff. It's a sad day when any nation fails to turn the wheels of justice. It is a tragedy for the people when civil law loses the power to deter crime. When retribution is no longer feared, a nation will be given to crime.

The human heart is so wicked that the conscience is not enough to hold it back from serious criminal activity. When someone commits murder, he often thinks that he will get away with it. Add to that the thought that even if he gets caught, he will probably only get a few years in prison, and then there is little to stop him. This is why the law needs to have teeth enough for us to fear the consequences of its violation.

Whatever the case, the day will come when ultimate justice will be done. On judgment day, God will bring the wheel over the wicked, and Jesus warned that it will grind to powder.

SOUL SEARCH: What am I seeking this day with my actions? Do I hope for God's favor or the favor of others?



**Father, help me to be eternally minded
as I go about this day. Amen.**

About the Author



RAY COMFORT is the best-selling author of more than eighty books. He is the co-host of an award-winning TV program that airs in 190 countries, and the producer of award-winning movies that have been seen by millions (see FullyFreeFilms.com). He lives in Southern California with his wife, Sue, and has three grown children. Connect with Ray and his many resources at LivingWaters.com.

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