

AT HOME IN THE BOOK OF
Proverbs
LIVING DAILY IN THE WISDOM OF GOD

SAMPLE PAGES:

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Lesson Seven, Days One through Four
Lesson Seven Children's Pages

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Wellsprings of Life

A Practical Study on Heart Evaluation

Tools Needed for each day's study:

Day One Bible, red pencil

Day Two Bible (*Depending on study method chosen:* commentary on Hebrews,
New Testament word study reference, concordance)

Day Three Bible

Day Four Bible (*Helpful:* concordance and cross-reference tools)

Day Five Bible

*Wisdom rests in the heart
of him who has understanding,
But what is in the heart
of fools is made known.*

Proverbs 14:33

Now where was that verse?

This verse begins with the words, “Wisdom rests.” If you write a **1** and a **4** about an inch apart and connect them, you have a “bed” with a “pillow.” **1**—————**4** Write the word wisdom on top of the line, and you have wisdom resting! This verse is found in chapter **fourteen**.

Lesson Seven

Day One _____
today's day/date

*“Wisdom _____ in the _____ of him who has understanding,
But what is in the _____ of fools is _____.”*
Proverbs __:33

“Kris! Stop!” Kindly but firmly, my husband called me back to godliness. We had just come home from a family outing, and as soon as I walked in and saw the disorderliness of the house, I reacted in the flesh. I wasn’t yelling, but no one doubted that I was unhappy. I was letting them know, by words, attitude and tone of voice, that I thought they were at fault.

They were not. I was.

*“There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword,
But the tongue of the wise promotes health.”*

*“A soft answer turns away wrath,
But a harsh word stirs up anger.”*

*“A wholesome tongue is a tree of life,
But perverseness in it breaks the spirit.”*

Proverbs 12:18, 15:1, 4

How about your heart attitudes and your mouth? Have they been instructed by the wisdom of God? Are they ready to be used for His glory every moment of every day? Are they a wellspring (source, fountain) of blessing to others?

“The mouth of the righteous is a well of life...”

*“The words of a man’s mouth are deep waters;
The wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook.”*

Proverbs 10:11a, 18:4

We will just skim the surface of this topic, but it will be powerful. Are you ready for a mini, middle-sized or extreme make-over of your mouth, attitude and heart?

1. In the situation above, my sinful frustration (anger) was “made known” through my words, attitude, tone of voice and body language (gestures, facial expressions, etc.), but its source was in my heart.

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.”

Proverbs 4:23

In fact, all emotions (both righteous and sinful) spring forth from this heart “fountain.” On the following chart:

- a. Record the emotions that Proverbs says reside in the heart. (*Note*: Also mark these verses with a red heart in your Bible. I have completed the two that you should have already marked in previous lessons.)
- b. Then, on a scale of 0-9, indicate approximately how often that emotion fills your heart.

Emotion(s)

How often in my heart?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Never</i>							<i>Always</i>		

a. **Proverbs 12:25**

b. **Proverbs 14:10**

c. Proverbs 14:13

d. Proverbs 15:13, 15

e. **Proverbs 17:22**

f. Proverbs 19:3 *rage, fretting*

g. Proverbs 23:15-16

h. **Proverbs 23:17** *envy*

i. **Proverbs 24:17**

j. Proverbs 25:20

2. These and other emotions flow from the heart: one obvious way they are “made known” is through words.

“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Matthew 12:34b

However, tone of voice and body language (using parts of the body to communicate feelings or thoughts) “speak” as much or more than our words.

On the following chart, **record the applicable portion of each verse under the correct heading.**

Verse

Tone of Voice

Body Language

a. Proverbs 12:18a

b. Proverbs 15:1

c. Proverbs 16:29-30

d. Proverbs 21:4

e. Proverbs 30:13

f. Proverbs 30:17

3. Before putting away your red pencil, mark Proverbs 14:33 (your memory verse for this week). Then, reviewing all your answers for today, what is your prayer to the LORD as you end your study?

Day Two _____
today's day/date

“ _____ rests _____ the heart of him who has _____,
_____ what is _____ the heart _____ is made known.”

Proverbs 14:33

Concerning children, Biblical Counselor Lou Priolo says, “Although Scripture forbids us from judging what is in the heart of another (1 Cor. 4:5, James 2:4) we are permitted to ask him to judge his own thoughts and motives (Acts 5:1-4, 1 Cor. 11:28-31, 2 Cor. 13:5). Consider Proverbs 20:5 ‘Counsel in the *heart* of man is as deep waters but a man of understanding will *draw* it out.’ (KJV).”¹

The rest of this week’s study will focus on how to draw out what is in the heart, examine it in light of Scripture, and if necessary, correct it.

Priolo says, “You have not done enough if you...teach your child simply *how to behave as a Christian*. Your responsibility as a Christian parent is to teach your child *how to think and be motivated as a Christian*, for only thereby can change in behavior be efficacious to the glory of God.”²

¹ Lou Priolo, *The Heart of Anger* (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1997) 94 (italics his).

² Priolo, 95.

However, before we can help another person to examine his or her heart, each of us must learn to do the same.

1. When you were a child, you might have heard your mother or father say something like:

“Is that a fib?”

“Are you minding me?”

“Is that a ‘pouty-mouth’ I see?”

“If you want to sulk, go in your room and do it where no one else has to see you.”

“It’s not nice to try to trick me.”

From your knowledge of Scripture (or you may use a concordance, if you wish) which of the underlined words are found in the Bible?

2. According to Hebrews 4:12, the Word is a powerful instrument that pierces into a person and works to discern (perceive clearly) *“the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12

Since the Scriptures are the tool, the standard, and the plumb line designed by God to help us discern the heart, what is the obvious problem with using and thinking in terms *not* found in Scripture?

3. If you are to search God’s Word for wisdom, understanding and discernment regarding the heart, you must know biblical terms!

Below are some common expressions for actions, thoughts, attitudes, and words that are or can be sinful. In the column on the right, provide biblical words with the same meaning. References do *not* need to be looked up unless you need a little help. Think of this as a mini-test to see how many biblical terms are readily on your tongue. Most expressions have more than one possible answer.

Common terms

Biblical term(s)

Stuck up / High and mighty (2 Timothy 3:2, Proverbs 11:2, 21:24)

Not minding (2 Timothy 3:2)

Holding a grudge (2 Timothy 3:3, Hebrews 12:15)

Sulking/pouting (2 Timothy 3:2-4)

Wanting everything you see (2 Timothy 3:2-3, Proverbs 1:19, 1 Corinthians 6:10)

Making fun of (2 Timothy 3:3, Proverbs 22:10, Acts 17:32, Romans 1:31)

Common terms

Biblical term(s)

He's all boy [when used as an excuse for sinful behavior]

(2 Timothy 3:3-4, Proverbs 16:32)

Tricky (Romans 1:29, Proverbs 12:20)

Talking under your breath (Romans 1:29)

Talking behind their back (Romans 1:30, Proverbs 20:19)

Talking back (Romans 1:30-31, Psalm 66:7)

Tattle (Romans 1:29, Proverbs 11:13)

Fib (Proverbs 12:22)

Dirty mouth (Proverbs 17:20, Ephesians 4:29, James 3:9-10, Colossians 3:8)

Naughty (Proverbs 29:22, Psalm 41:7)

Having an affair (Proverbs 30:20)

4. In your everyday thoughts, speech, parenting and discipling, do you use more common terms or biblical terms?

5. Of course, using the common words of the day is not sinful. However, a question to consider is: If people thought and spoke more in biblical terms, might it make a difference in their own heart or the hearts of those they disciple? If so, how? If not, why not?

6. Spend the rest of your time today studying Hebrews 4:12. You may use any study method(s) you wish, for example:

list what this verse says about the Word of God

complete word studies (*you will need a New Testament word study reference*)

paraphrase

summarize

write out the verse several times (*each time with a different key word in all caps*)

cross-reference some of the words or phrases

gain insight from any commentaries you have (*only after your own study is complete!*)

Be sure to begin and end with prayer. Record study notes in the box that follows.

Study notes on Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

(Indicate with a star any insights that have been particularly interesting or helpful.)

Day Three _____
today's day/date

“ _____ in the heart of him who has understanding,
_____ what _____ heart of fools _____ made _____.”

Proverbs __:33

Have you ever thought, “If only God had just put all the truths I need on a subject in one chapter, it would be so much simpler”? Yet there is much benefit in a spiritual treasure hunt. God designed it that way. It is good for our sanctification, our faith and our witness.

So how does one begin a search for knowledge that sinks deep into the heart and ends up on the lips?

1. Read Proverbs 2:1-6 and then write out verse 4 below.

a. How would you sum up what the search for wisdom is like?

b. Why is true treasure *not* usually found on the surface?

2. God gives many images which explain the immense value of a wisdom hunt. In each reference below, underline the words or phrases that tell of the worth of finding and living by wisdom. (The first four lines are completed for you.)

Why Search the Scriptures for Wisdom?

*“[Wise words] are life to those who find them,
And health to all their flesh.” (4:22)*

*“For wisdom is better than rubies,
And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.” (8:11)*

*“Riches and honor are with me [Wisdom],
Enduring riches and righteousness.” (8:18)*

“The tongue of the wise promotes health.” (12:18)

“The law of the wise is a fountain of life.” (13:14)

*“How much better to get wisdom than gold!
And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.” (16:16)*

*“There is desirable treasure,
And oil in the dwelling of the wise...” (21:20)*

*“Through wisdom a house is built...
By knowledge the rooms are filled
With all precious and pleasant riches.” (24:3-4)*

3. To you, which Scripture above best sums up the great reward of a search for wisdom?

4. In his commentary on Proverbs, Charles Bridges (1794-1869) writes:

Think of the miner's indefatigable efforts, his invincible resolution and untiring perseverance. This is the way we should **search** the sacred storehouse. To read instead of searching the Scriptures is to just skim the surface and collect a few superficial ideas. The secret of success in finding **hidden treasure** is to dig the entire field. If we do not find anything, we must dig again. We need to daily search the length and breadth and depth of our fruitful store until we are filled with God's fullness (Ephesians 3:18-19).³

Record Bridges' thoughts about:

a. How one must search.

b. The secret to a successful search.

c. What to do if you do not find anything.

5. Now, back to the original question at the beginning of today's lesson: How does one begin a search for knowledge that sinks deep into the heart and ends up on the lips—a search that will ultimately be a source of life and health and enduring riches for those we love and disciple?

On the next page is a flow chart entitled "Getting to the Heart of the Matter." Dedicate the rest of your time today to looking over the chart, understanding it, and prayerfully considering what is involved in sinking God's precious, life-giving truths deep into the heart. When you are done, write your thoughts or impressions in the box below. Tomorrow we will practice applying it to daily life.

Note: Verses referenced in the flow chart give biblical support for each action.
As time permits, look up these verses and mark those found in Proverbs.

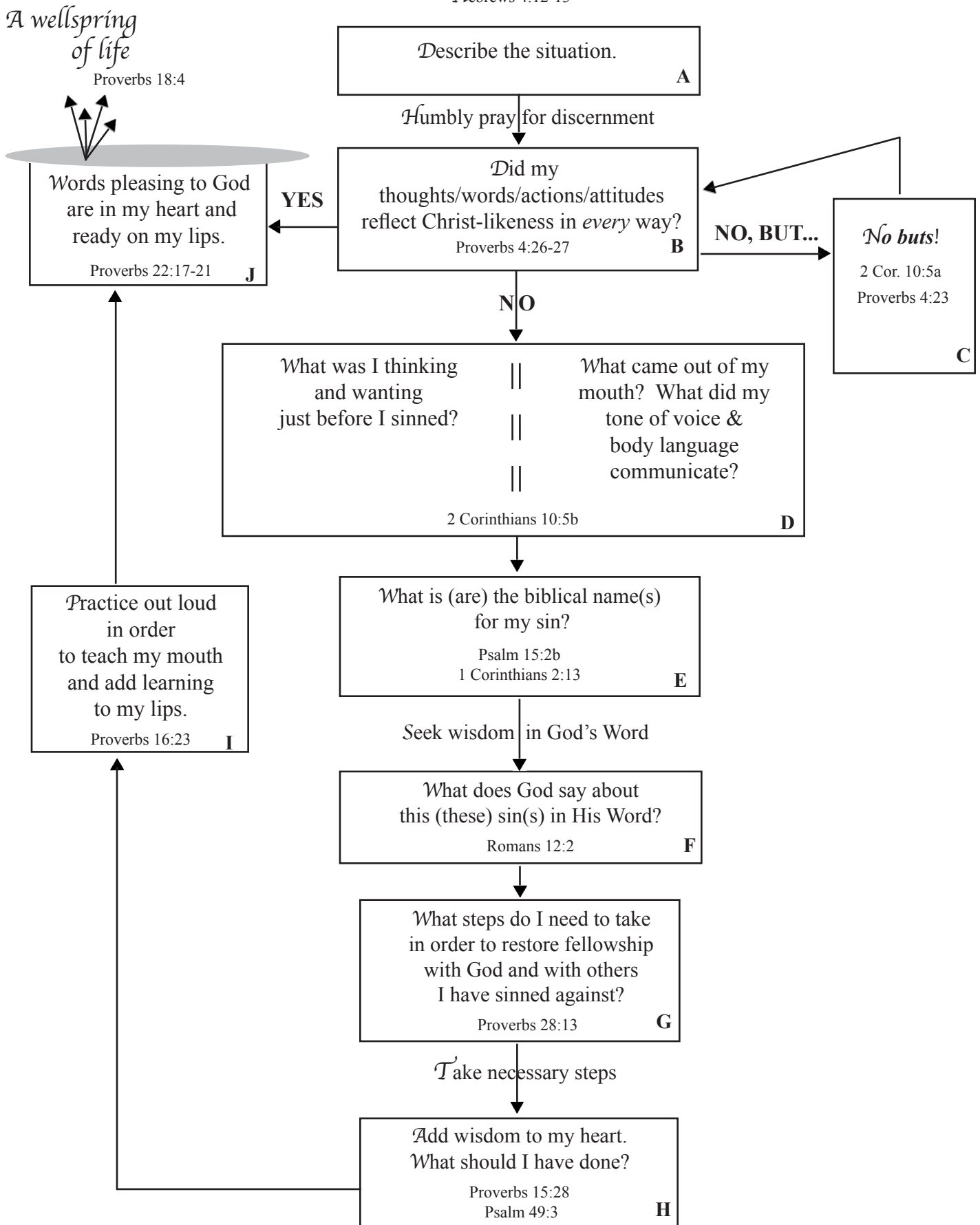
*For my heart to teach my mouth wisdom...
Thoughts upon reviewing the diagnostic flow chart*

³ Charles Bridges; Alister McGrath and J. I. Packer, eds., Proverbs (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001) 22, boldface type his.

GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

A Diagnostic Flow Chart

Hebrews 4:12-13



Day Four _____

today's day/date

*"Wisdom _____ in _____ of him _____ understanding,
But what is _____ the _____ of _____ is _____ known."*

Proverbs __:33

"We must never allow our mouths to attempt to speak wisdom until our hearts have been given over to meditation and understanding...Each person should separate himself from other people and be alone with God, under the clear, searching light of his Word."⁴

Do you remember the situation at the beginning of this week's lesson? (If not, briefly review page 85.) Using the flow chart, we will use this situation to diagnose what was in my heart...and what needed to be done about it. I'm putting myself at your mercy, so be gentle...and, oh yes, you're next!

1. Each box on the flow chart is labeled with a letter so that you can refer back and forth. Are you ready to go with me as I let the Word of God penetrate deep into my heart? I will answer the initial questions (since you cannot know what was in my heart), and then you will help in the diagnosis and correction phase. Let's go!

A. Describe the situation

The day had been hectic. My husband had worked late, and supper was rushed. I had spent too long on a project earlier in the day, so I was not on top of things. We left on a family outing right after supper. When we left, the house had not been straightened, the toys were out (though I had asked my children to put them away), and the supper dishes were not fully cleaned. These things didn't seem to bother me as we were leaving. The outing was fun but long. When we returned, it was bedtime for the kids (ages 4 and 8). I was tired, too.

We walked in the door and the immensity (well, at that time of day it seemed immense!) of the disorder hit me. I began brusquely (okay, extremely brusquely...and with exaggerated movements) clearing the dishes off the table. I said things to the children such as, "If you had done what I asked you to before we left, we wouldn't have had to come home to this mess" and "Didn't I tell you to put away your things?" and "Why don't you two ever listen when I talk?" I didn't say anything directly to my husband, but I certainly felt that he could have been of more help.

Then my husband took me firmly by the shoulders and said, "Kris! Stop!"

A → B Humbly pray for discernment.

Father, I desire to be pleasing to You in all things. Only you know my heart. I ask you to enable me to put aside all pretense and examine my heart in truth. Show me what is there...and if there is sin, guide me to the truth and show me what you would have me to do. Thank You, Lord. Amen.

⁴ Bridges, 206.

B. Christ-like in *every way*?

(Ponder the path of my feet...Proverbs 4:26)

No, I was not Christ-like in every way, **but** neither were my kids when they didn't pick up...

C. No Buts!

Back to B. Christ-like in *every way*?

No, I was not, **but** if my husband had just...

C. No Buts!

Back to B. Christ-like in *every way*?

No. Things just got away from me. I know I should have not stayed at my project for so long, **but** I just wanted...

C. No Buts!

Back to B. Christ-like in *every way*?

No...**but** I don't usually respond that way. I was just tired.

C. No Buts!

Back to B. Christ-like in *every way*?

No.

(finally!)

D. Thoughts, desires and communication

(Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...2 Corinthians 10:5b)

What was I thinking and wanting?		What did I communicate?
I wanted a clean house even though I had not taken time to clean up during the day.		Words? "If you had just..."
I was tired and I wanted the kids to get in bed quickly, but they had walked in and begun playing with the toys that were left out.		Tone of voice? Irritated / Annoyed Like an unhappy drill sergeant
I wished that my husband had been around to help before we left and that I would have him home the next day.		Body language? Brusque Mad

Now here is where you start to get involved!

E. Name it biblically.

(Speaking truth in the heart...Psalm 15:2)

In order to gain wisdom from God's Word, my sin must be called what God calls it. There are at least five biblical words that describe my words/actions/attitudes/thoughts. How many can you think of? (*Note:* Your list from Day Two may be of some help.)

Some biblical names for my sins are:

F. What does God say? Search for precious wisdom that can bring about life-change!

(“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:2)

Below are two of the biblical names I found for my sin. Find and record some verses of wisdom about each one. If you are short on time, limit your study to the book of Proverbs.⁵

a. sinful anger [*What I called “frustration” (common term) was actually anger (biblical term).*]

b. pride [*I was blame-shifting and ignoring God’s commands to be kindhearted, patient, etc.*]

In addition, my other sins (such as laziness, harsh words, and selfishness) would need to be studied as well. Then I would have more wisdom to renew my mind, reinforce God’s commands, instill in me a greater desire to live like Christ, and help me guard my heart in the future.

G. Restore fellowship with God and others.

(Confess and forsake...Proverbs 28:13)

Given the situation and the wisdom I have found in God’s Word, what do I need to do?

Repent? Confess? To whom? Ask forgiveness? Of whom? Use Scripture in your answer. (For example, 1 John 1:9)

⁵ In case you do not have access to a concordance or cross-references, some verses for each category are:

a. Proverbs 14:17, 29; 16:32; 17:27; 21:23 *b.* Proverbs 6:16-19; 8:13; 11:2; 14:3; 16:18-19; 18:12; 21:4; 28:25; 29:23

H. Add wisdom.

(Study how to answer...Proverbs 15:28)

Having finished the steps necessary to renew fellowship with God and others, it is time to figure out what I should have done and said. How could I have behaved in a Christ-like manner in this situation? What thoughts would have been God-honoring? What words would have been a blessing to my family? Below, write a response that would have been appropriate for this situation.

I. Practice.

(Teach my mouth and add learning to my lips...Proverbs 16:23)

Next, I would practice what I would like to say and do the next time I encounter a similar situation. I think that the best way to accomplish this is by talking out loud (but probably with no one else around!). This way, I can also practice using the right tone of voice, etc. For example, two possible responses I could practice are:

“Wow! We sure left this place in a mess. Let’s all spend five minutes picking up the big stuff before bed...and then we’ll finish in the morning.”

or

[to my husband] “I didn’t realize we left the house in such a mess. I’d like it to be nice for breakfast in the morning. Would you mind putting the kids to bed while I clean up a little? Then maybe we could spend a few minutes together before we call it a night.”

Are either of these similar to your response in **H** above? Can you think of any more responses that would be pleasing to the LORD?

J. Words pleasing to God are now in my heart (thoughts) and ready on my lips.

Write the words of Proverbs 22:17-19 below.

2. Spend some time in meditation and prayer. How badly do you want God’s wisdom ready on your lips, as a precious treasure that will bring refreshment, health and blessing to many? Are you willing to diagnose any sin problems in your heart and search the Scriptures for the wisdom you need?



END OF SAMPLE LESSON
Sample children’s pages follow

Lesson Seven

Different Hearts

To the tune of, "America the Beautiful"

O wisdom rests, inside the heart,
Of him who understands,
But what is in the hearts of fools
Will always be made known.

Don't be a fool! Don't be a fool!
Let wisdom rest within.
Search wisdom out.
There is no doubt:
This treasure is from Him!

What Am I Really Saying?

This activity is a challenge game. The goal is to say the same phrase at least three times using a different tone of voice and/or body language each time.

Materials: Two sets of cards
one set with phrases (number is up to you)
one set with four cards, one for each tone of voice
Video camera (optional)

Steps: Lay the four tone of voice cards side by side on the floor or table
In turn, each participant chooses one phrase card and tries to say that phrase using at least three different tones
Other participants guess which tone is being used (Score keeping is optional)
If keeping score, award extra points for accompanying body language
Adapt game to various ages
If desired, video the game for further teaching opportunities
(*Note:* This does not have to be played as a game: it can simply be a learning/teaching activity)

Tones: Sweet/pleasant Mocking/sarcastic Harsh Piercing

Phrases: *Here are some phrases to get you started.
Feel free to add phrases that your family uses on a regular basis.
Also, let children choose phrases that they often hear you say!*

No, thank you.
Okay. I won't do it.
Broccoli? (*or other disliked food*)
I'll be there in just a minute.
I don't know.
I didn't do it.

Wise Counsel

Jim pushed the peas around on his plate and looked back at his mom.

“I just don’t know, Jim. You know I want to do what is best for you, but I’m not sure right now what that is. Why don’t we go over after dinner and talk to Grandpa?”

“Why do you always go ask Grandpa the hard questions? Couldn’t you just make a decision yourself?”

“Well, there are two reasons I ask him for advice about raising you. First, you’re a boy, and I don’t know much about being a boy. If your dad was still with us, then he could help. But as it is...”

“I know,” Jim said.

“But, most importantly, your grandpa is a very wise man. He loves the Lord, and he has studied the Bible a lot. If someone asks him a question, he doesn’t just give good advice—he also says what passage in the Bible he is using to form his answer.”

“If he knows so much, then why is he always so quiet? Shouldn’t he go out and help everybody know what to do?”

“Proverbs says that wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding, but what is in the heart of fools is made known. Grandpa is very wise, and part of that involves knowing when to talk and when to be quiet. In fact, one of the characteristics of fools is that they are very talkative and loose with words.”

“Yeah, but if we keep asking him for help, he’ll just think I have too many problems.”

“No, I don’t think that thought will even cross his mind. He has told me that he’s happy to help us, and the Bible says that it is wise to seek godly counsel. In fact, I hope that you become a wise man who both seeks counsel from others and gives counsel to those who need it. As Christians, we have to help each other.”

Jim took a deep breath and looked back down at his peas for a moment. “All right,” he finally said. “I guess we should go ask Grandpa.”

“He loves you, too, Jim. Don’t worry about going over there. He wants to do what’s best for you and to help me find God’s will for you, too.”

“Okay.” Jim relaxed a little. “But can I skateboard to his house instead of walking?”

“Sure,” his mom said. “Maybe I’ll ride my bike. I won’t look as cool as you do, but it would be fun.”

“Yeah!” Jim hopped up from the table and grabbed his helmet. “I’m ready if you are!”

- ◆ *Have you ever wanted to keep your problems to yourself instead of seeking godly counsel?*
- ◆ *Do you think Jim’s mom was wise to suggest asking his grandfather when Jim wanted her to “just make a decision”? Why or why not?*
- ◆ *Jim was afraid his grandfather would think he had too many problems. What are some other reasons someone might not want to ask for advice when faced with a hard question?*
- ◆ *Ask God to give you the desire to seek godly counsel the next time you are unsure about something.*

Teen Survey Question

About which of the following subjects not directly addressed in the Bible would people you know be most/least likely to spend time searching for biblical wisdom? Why?

Dating	Movies	Hair styles	Checking accounts
Homework	Video games	CDs	Driving a car
Body art/piercings	Sports	Talking on the telephone	Clothing styles

END OF SAMPLE