

THINGS TO STOP AND START STUDY ONE

Stop Drifting Along and Start Digging In

Proverbs 2:1–9

You have a prayer list? Put at the top of your prayer list, “My need for wisdom.” Pray for it every day.

—Charles R. Swindoll

WHAT do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!” (1 Kings 3:5). That’s quite an offer! The Lord visited Solomon in a dream and said that He would grant whatever the king requested. Solomon could have chosen any glittering prize his heart desired—wealth, fame, power, long life . . . anything! Instead, Solomon prayed for *wisdom*:

“Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference between right and wrong.” (1 Kings 3:9)

Have you ever faced a large task like Solomon’s and prayed God would help you discern the right way from the wrong way? The good news is that wisdom is readily available in Jesus Christ, for “in him lie hidden *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*” (Colossians 2:3, emphasis added). What a marvelous thought! All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are as near to us as our Savior. A prayer in His name, a search for truth in His Word, and a willingness to walk in His footsteps are the keys to unlocking wisdom’s storehouse.

What can we expect to discover when we seek the Lord’s wisdom, which is far more valuable than wealth, power, or fame? In Proverbs 2:1–9, King Solomon described the treasures of wisdom that he discovered. Let’s *dig in* and see what gems we find!



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Digging in to God's truth requires something from us. It's easy to drift into a shallow and superficial life, swept along by the currents of our fast-paced world. God calls us to a deeper life, however, one in which we take time to understand His Word and apply His wisdom.

Use the following verse as a prompt to write a prayer to the Lord, expressing your desire to *stop drifting along and start digging in* to His Word so that you can become a wiser, more mature Christian.

*Open my eyes to see
the wonderful truths in your instructions. (Psalm 119:18)*



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

In the *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, we first observe the passage and make notes on what we see. Reading at least two versions of the Bible is a good study practice. So, read [Proverbs 2:1–9](#) in the New Living Translation, then read below the same passage in the New American Standard Bible. Notice how the NASB makes clear the conditional clauses. Find the words *if* and *then* and circle or highlight them. Also, mark the word *for* in 2:6.

*My son, if you will receive my words
And treasure my commandments within you,
Make your ear attentive to wisdom,
Incline your heart to understanding;
For if you cry for discernment,
Lift your voice for understanding;
If you seek her as silver
And search for her as for hidden treasures;*



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*Then you will discern the fear of the LORD
 And discover the knowledge of God.
 For the LORD gives wisdom;
 From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.
 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
 He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
 Guarding the paths of justice,
 And He preserves the way of His godly ones.
 Then you will discern righteousness and justice
 And equity and every good course. (Proverbs 2:1–9 NASB)*

Can you see Solomon’s flow of thought? If we do “x,” then “y” follows for the result of “z.” In the chart below, write down the main verbal phrases associated with the *if* and *then* clauses. We can call these “conditions” and “discoveries.” Also note the verbal phrases associated with the word *for*, which reveal the “promises.” We included the first phrases as samples.

Conditions “If” Verbal Phrases (Proverbs 2:1–4 NASB)	Discoveries “Then” Verbal Phrases (Proverbs 2:5, 9)	Promises “For” Verbal Phrases (Proverbs 2:6–8)
“receive my words” (2:1 NASB)	“discern the fear of the LORD” (2:5 NASB)	“the LORD gives wisdom” (2:6 NASB)



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As you reflect on these *conditions*, *discoveries*, and *promises*, what else do you observe? Do you see any repeated or emphasized thoughts? Any contrasts or comparisons? Metaphors or similes?

Now let's dig deeper into the meaning of Solomon's words in the interpretation phase.



Interpretation: The Essential Ingredient—Wisdom!

This passage contains Solomon's *instructions* for gaining the wisdom of God. He began by addressing pursuers. What must we do if we wish to pursue wisdom?

The Conditions for Pursuers—Proverbs 2:1–4

Solomon highlighted four disciplines that we must maintain. Can you name them? Look back at your observations above and write down a brief explanation of their meaning as you answer the following questions.

What does it mean to “receive my words” (Proverbs 2:1 NASB)?



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What does it mean to “make your ear attentive” and “incline your heart” (Proverbs 2:2 NASB)?

What are we doing when we “cry” and “lift” our voices (2:3 NASB)?

What is implied when we “seek” and “search” for wisdom (2:4)?

As patient pursuers of wisdom, we are like *archaeologists*, who methodically sift dirt on a site and carefully examine artifacts, and we are like *miners*, who doggedly dig for treasure. We stay at the task until we find the truth we seek!

The Lord does not give His wisdom to the hurried soul. It takes time, effort, sacrifice, and determination. —Chuck Swindoll



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The Treasures We Discover—Proverbs 2:5–9

What treasures will those who pursue wisdom discover? Name them from the verses below and write a brief explanation of their meaning.

What does the “fear of the LORD” mean (Proverbs 2:5)?

What does it mean to “discern righteousness and justice / And equity and every good course” (2:9 NASB)?
Hint: helpful insights into these words are in the New Living Translation of [Proverbs 2:9](#).

Fearing the Lord doesn't mean you become afraid of Him. It means you take Him seriously, and with fear of the Lord comes hatred for the things that drive you away from Him.
—Chuck Swindoll

The Benefits That the Lord Promises

Finally, what benefits of wisdom does the Lord promise to give us? Note these benefits from the following verses as you answer the questions below.



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What do you think is the difference between wisdom, knowledge, and understanding (Proverbs 2:6)?

What will the Lord do for those who not only find wisdom but who live wisely (2:7–9)?

Weave your thoughts into three principles that you have gathered from this study so far.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What is wisdom? It is “the cultivated skill of applying God’s truth to knowledge.” It includes discerning truth from error (knowing right from wrong). It provides a heightened awareness of danger and evil. It also opens our eyes to ourselves and others. —Chuck Swindoll



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Correlation: Shedding Light on Wisdom

In the correlation phase, we shed more light on wisdom by looking at other Bible passages. What is the first step we should take when we need wisdom, according to *James 1:5*?

Like a father who delights in sharing his wealth with his children, God freely and generously pours His wisdom into our hands. However, God intends us to follow His counsel. According to *Proverbs 1:23–31*, when wisdom rebukes us, what must we do? And if we do *not* choose godly wisdom, what consequences may follow?

If you choose to live without wisdom, you will live in the jaws of consequences. You will be confused and never realize why bad things happen. With wisdom, you will be free from panic, and God will open your eyes to understand what He wants to teach you. —Chuck Swindoll



Application: Four Results of Going Deeper

When we stop drifting along and start digging in to the wisdom of God's Word, what can we expect to happen? Chuck offers four benefits of the deeper life.



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- *Depth gives substance to our faith.* The wisdom of the Word will anchor our lives when doubts threaten to toss us around.
- *Depth stabilizes us during testing.* What keeps us standing during the worst of life's storms? Roots that go deep in the wisdom of Scripture.
- *Depth enables us to handle the Word of God accurately.* Grounding ourselves in truth helps us interpret the more difficult sections of the Bible.
- *Depth equips us to detect truth from error.* Wisdom helps us recognize false teaching.

Which of these benefits (or any of the other benefits of wisdom from our study) do you need the most and why?

What nuggets of wisdom have you dug up in our study that you can apply to your life today?

You'll never find a course titled "Getting Wisdom" in the catalog of your local college. But God's classroom is open, and all students can register for His course at any time. Take a moment to enter Christ's presence and pray for wisdom. And then, open your heart to His words and ways. You can never hope to own any greater treasure than Christ's wisdom and knowledge!



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A FINAL PRAYER

Father, in my journey from earth to heaven, help me slow down on the world's highway of fast-paced living. I long to gaze into the face of the Lord Jesus and learn from Him the insight of the ages that only He can offer. I patiently await Your wisdom. Pour over me Your truth and empower me to live in it today. Amen.



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Tools for Digging Deeper



Things to Stop and Start
by Charles R. Swindoll
CD series



**Leisure: How to Recharge
without Guilt**
by Charles R. Swindoll
booklet



**Rules for Running a
Rewarding Race**
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For the 2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.

