

Unit 1

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

Welcome to FatherWise. Get acquainted with the men in your small prayer group and fill in the chart below.

FatherWise Leader

Name: _____ Wife's name: _____

Children's names and ages:

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____

Prayer Group

Name: _____ Wife's name: _____

Children's names and ages:

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____

Name: _____ Wife's name: _____

Children's names and ages:

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____

Name: _____ Wife's name: _____

Children's names and ages:

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____

Name: _____ Wife's name: _____

Children's names and ages:

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____

Questions For Introductory Unit Discussion

1. The thing I like best about being a father is _____
2. My greatest problem as a father is _____
3. I hope to be like/not like my dad in the following ways:

FatherWise Prayer Group Guidelines

After the Bible Study portion of your FatherWise meeting, break into small groups of 5-6 men for prayer each week.

We recommend prayer time before the parenting skills discussion. Experience has taught us that it is difficult to stop discussion and begin prayer time. Please keep prayer requests limited to yourself and your immediate family [wife and children]. While we realize that prayer for extended family and friends is very important, when the requests are more personal, the group bonds and becomes a true community of support.

Please remember that what is discussed in prayer time is confidential. It is not to be shared outside the group. In general, we will try to follow the "Six S's for Prayer Time" They are...

- (1) Subject by subject
- (2) Short Prayers
- (3) Simple Prayers
- (4) Specific Prayer Requests
- (5) Silent Periods
- (6) Small Groups

Prayer is a vital part of FatherWise. We look forward to all that God will do in it and through it!

FATHERWISE GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

The first person in the group will share a one sentence prayer request about himself, his wife or children. Each person in the group will pray a one to two sentence prayer over that request before moving on to the next person's request. The group will continue in this way until everyone has prayed over each request.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

A Beginning

Before you start gaining wisdom, the first and most important step is to have a personal relationship with God.

And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.

To trust God fully you must trust Him through Jesus Christ, His Son.

In John 14:6, Jesus says of himself, "*I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.*"

Turning your life over to Jesus is the only way to have a relationship with God. You must go through Jesus to get to God. If you have never entered into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, ask God to speak to you as you explore this truth in the book of Romans.

The Roman Road to Salvation:

Romans 3:23 "*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*"

Romans 6:23 "*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

Romans 5:8 "*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*"

Romans 10:9, 10 "*That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;...for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*"

Romans 10:13 "*For whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.*"

To have a relationship with God and put your full trust in Him you must:

Acknowledge that you are a sinner and that you need a relationship with Jesus Christ to save you from eternal hell.

Admit and Confess your sins.

About Face, turning from sin to God.

Ask Jesus to save you by His grace.

Allow Jesus Christ to rule your life. ²²

If you are ready, pray a prayer like this:

"Lord Jesus, I am a sinner and I admit it. I am confessing this to you today. Forgive me of my sins. I want your death on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins. I turn now from my sin and I turn to You. Save me and have mercy on me, Lord. Be my master and my Lord. You alone are my God. In Jesus name I pray. Amen."

If you prayed that prayer from your heart, the angels are rejoicing! You are now God's son! You've just been born into a new family! NOW you have the power source to become the kind of father your children who can bless your children.

Call on your pastor or FatherWise group leader or a Christian friend to share this important decision. You need to tell someone about your new faith!

Matthew 10:32

Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

Unit 1
The Search for Wisdom

We can get training and higher education in almost every field imaginable—except being a husband and father. But it's going to take more than training and education...it's going to require wisdom. Real answers is what we all want and it can be found in an ancient book of wisdom—the Word of God.

WISE MAN

Lord, I am ready to listen to what You want to say to me. I need your wisdom to be the man you want me to be. I give my life to You as a special offering. I ask You to work in powerful ways in me! I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Portrait of a Godly Man

Read Psalm 1

You want to be a godly man. You want to make good decisions. So how will you do that? Psalm 1 gives you a snapshot of a godly man. There you'll find what a godly man doesn't do, what he does, and then what his character is like.

First, we see what a man who wants to be godly does not do. Take notice in verse one of the progression of wickedness. It's easy to get "lured" into doing wrong by a small compromise that grows into something out of control. How can we avoid this? Look in verse 2. By delighting and meditating on God's Word, you'll get the wisdom you are seeking. This is what we want to accomplish in this Bible study. We hope you'll not only read Scripture, but meditate on it.

The word picture of meditating is like a cow chewing its cud. The cow chews and chews, over and over, even bringing it back up from its second stomach to chew again! We are to meditate on God's Word until we get the full revelation. This is not skim reading like you do the newspaper, but really thinking through the passages of Scripture you read.

Verse 3 of this chapter says when we do this we will be like a tree planted by "streams of water." Have you noticed how the biggest and

strongest trees grow near a river or body of water? They grow because they have a steady source of life sustaining water to nourish their root system.

That's what you and I need. We need a steady source of God's wisdom and discernment to nourish our lives, giving us the resources to make wise decisions. The result is a "storm and weather resistant" life that not only bears fruit, but also prospers. What a promise! Join me in sinking our roots deep into His word as we study and are strengthened together!

Lord, I pray for a hunger and thirst for You and Your Word. I pray that You would remove any barriers of resistance in my life that will prevent me from hearing from You. Lord, speak in a way I can hear You and give me open ears to hear. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Tips for Dad

As a young husband and father, committing to a daily quiet time for Bible study and prayer was really a challenge. I couldn't see how I could spare any time for this. What I needed was motivation. So let me give you a challenge similar to the one I received as a young man. I challenge you to spend 15-30 minutes a day for the next 10 weeks, without missing a day, using this Bible study for the most part as your guide. I took a 30 day challenge like this nearly 25 years ago, and it changed my life forever. Let's see what it does for you.

Day 2

WISE COUNSEL

Lord, thank You for the privilege of being a dad. It is an awesome calling to minister to each of my children as a special and unique gift. Lord, give me an open and hungry heart to hear from You. Speak in a way I can understand. In Jesus name, Amen.

A Starting Place

You can receive training and instruction in almost every subject except fatherhood. There are no special schools to attend for this most important job! You have to get a license to drive a car, but becoming a parent only takes two willing bodies and a blood test! I think you'd agree with me that we should invest in time training ourselves for the most important mentoring role we'll ever have—being a dad. The book of Proverbs gives us good place to begin getting that instruction.

A Wise Man's Wisdom

READ Proverbs 1:1-7 in your Bible.

King Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs. He was the wisest man that has ever lived. It seems reasonable then that we begin our study with his writings. They will give us the “wisdom and instruction, discernment, and understanding in the wise behavior” we need as fathers.

Take a look at Proverbs 1:2-6 where we find 8 benefits a man receives in studying the book of Proverbs.

- Know wisdom and instruction
- Discern wise sayings

- Receive instruction in wise behavior
- Prudence for the naïve
- Youth know knowledge and discretion
- Wise counsel for men of understanding
- Comprehension of the words of the wise
- Fear of the Lord, the beginning of all wisdom

This sounds like a wish list for a man desiring to be a great father. The Bible is our source book for this kind of wisdom.

READ I Kings 4:29-34

This passage describes the resume of the wisest man that walked the earth. He's the author of the book of Proverbs. His bio is strong! This is a guy we need to read! Solomon was a prolific author and songwriter, was a biologist in both botany and zoology, and was the richest and most famous man on the planet. God gave him supernatural wisdom, and the ability to write it down for you and me. Instead of discovering the wheel on our own, during the next few weeks, we're going to read Solomon's wisdom writings, as well as other inspired writers of Scripture. We'll learn from their mistakes as well as learning what they did right.

Take the challenge to read your Bible daily and spend time in prayer. You and your family will be glad you did.

Lord, I need Your wisdom. I cannot make the right decisions as a husband and father without You. Fill my mind with Your thoughts. Protect me from wrong thoughts and ideas. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Tips for Dad

Pray with your children individually. Tell God what a blessing they are to you!

THE VALUE OF WISDOM

Lord Jesus, it's not more information, but inspiration I need to be a godly father. This job is too complicated for me! Please fill me with Your holy life, love, and power. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Intelligence versus Wisdom

Some men don't spend any time thinking about being a good dad. Others worry that they'll never measure up to the task. There are lots of good books and magazine on parenting. The seminars and conferences for parents abound. But is getting more information the real answer to better parenting?

The Bible introduces a different idea. Wisdom is more than gaining information through the intellect. "*Hakam*" is one of the Hebrew words translated "wisdom" in English. It doesn't mean the gathering of information. The idea behind this word is to master the art of living according to God's expectations.¹ To be wise is a process of using God's Word as a guide for daily life decisions.

The prerequisite for "wisdom" is the fear of the Lord.

READ Proverbs 1:7.

The fear mentioned in this verse means to reverence God, to show Him honor and to demonstrate respect. Before we can begin the journey of gaining wisdom as fathers, we first must bow our hearts before God in humble submission. A proud and haughty spirit cannot receive wisdom. This is hard for most men, let's admit it!

READ Proverbs 3:13-26.

Apply the definition you've just learned about "wisdom" every time you see the word in these verses.

What is the value of wisdom given in these verses? Note the three things to which wisdom is compared.

Proverbs tells us there is a profit to be made in finding wisdom, and that profit margin is huge! It is better than investing in precious metals...silver and gold! It's more valuable than dealing in valuable gemstones. Nothing you could ever hope for in your financial portfolio can compare with the outstanding value of being a wise man.

God is ready to bless those who seek His wisdom. Wisdom is available to you. But you've got to want it. You must seek it. If you really want wisdom from the Lord, He will give you the desire of your heart.

Lord, You are revealing my need for Your wisdom. I admit I am often weak and ineffective with my family. I confess I am self-centered and many times controlling. Lord, forgive me. Change me. Hear my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Tips for Dad

Discuss with your wife the areas of parenting where you both need more wisdom. Pray with her about these areas so you can become more of "one mind" as parents. Don't leave your wife to make parenting decisions alone. Seek God's wisdom...TOGETHER.

Day 4

WISDOM'S CALL

Father, remove any barriers in my heart and mind that would keep me from receiving Your Word as I study. Prepare me to hear from you, Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

The Choice

Today's Bible study may present a problem for you. After reading the Scripture, you will have to make a choice. You will no longer be ignorant about where to find the wisdom you need to be a godly husband and father. The decision you will have to make is: Am I willing to do whatever it takes to be the best father I can be? Am I ready to admit I need real help?

READ Proverbs 1:20-2:11. What is wisdom's call? [See verses 22-23]

What happens when wisdom is ignored?

How can we discover the knowledge of God? (See Proverbs 2:1-5)

Wisdom is depicted lifting its voice and shouting in the street calling to the naive ones to turn and listen. The spirit of wisdom is poured out on all who listen. When wisdom is ignored "*calamity comes on like a whirlwind.*" The knowledge of God comes when we receive wisdom and "*treasure His commandments within us.*"

To whom will you listen?

READ I Corinthians 1:20-31. What do verses 21 and 25 say about the wisdom of the world?

Wisdom for Fathers

There is no other true source of wisdom than the Word of God. The written Word which is the Bible and the living Word who is Jesus Christ can give you the power of God and the wisdom of God for being a dad and for every other facet of your life. (See verse 24)

According to verse 30, how does God give us His wisdom? If you're like me, the role of a father is pretty humbling and sometimes I feel pretty "unFatherWise." But examine verses 27-30 more closely. God has chosen you—even with all your inadequacies—so He might display His wisdom, His righteousness, His sanctification and His redemption through you.

This course in fathering will not teach you "Ten Steps To Becoming the Perfect Father," but prayerfully it will lead you to recognize that God will supply the wisdom, discernment, and insights you need if you will only surrender to Him. Jesus is calling you to TOTAL SURRENDER AND ABSOLUTE ABANDONMENT to His life flowing through you. Ask God to prepare your heart for all he has in store in the next few weeks.

"Father, I ask that You make me a container of Your life as I approach this task of being a godly husband and father. Fill me to all the fullness of You. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen."

Tips for Dad

Go on a media diet today. Try going through this whole day without reading the paper, watching television, or listening to the radio, CD's or tapes. Spend the day in God's presence even while you are going about all your other tasks. Listen to "Wisdom's call" instead of listening to the "world's wisdom."

Day 5

ACQUIRING WISDOM

Lord, I come to you today humbly to ask for your help. I need your wisdom to fulfill this awesome task of being a godly father. Reveal Yourself to me today. This is my prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Go get it!

Men, you know if you really want to reach a goal, you're going to have to make the effort to obtain it. Many times it will require hard work and sacrifice, right? Well, guess what? If you want wisdom you will have to aggressively go for it!

READ Proverbs 4:5-9. What are the rewards for acquiring wisdom?

We are told in verse 7 that wisdom is supreme, so we should make sure we obtain it. The next part of that verse gives us a little clue about the price tag attached. "Though it cost all you have, get understanding." Whoa! Cost all I have?

You're starting to get the picture that this is a commodity that is unlike anything you can obtain on earth. This wisdom is not just instruction, not just information. Wisdom from God is obtainable only through relationship with God Himself, and to receive it, you cannot be full of yourself, but will need to be in a receptive mode, ready to receive Him.

READ Proverbs 4:10-15, 18

What are the blessings of listening to wisdom?

What actions are you to take to acquire wisdom?

Wisdom Brings Life

READ Proverbs 4:20-27

What are the rewards of wisdom?

What are the warnings given in this passage?

You have probably caught yourself doing things just like your father did. Things you told yourself you would never do! Without thinking it through, words come flying out of your mouth and you take actions against your family that you regret. You'd like to change, but maybe you've given up on that. Being wise instead of foolish in those areas seems like an impossible dream.

Here's your chance to make that change. I'm inviting you to commit yourself to God to learn His wisdom, His way. You'll be immersing yourself in Him as you drink in God's Word each day. It may happen gradually, but I can assure you that everyone who spends time getting to know God by studying His Word is transformed by it.

"How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver." Proverbs 16:16

Tips for Dad

Try to find another dad to pray with on a regular basis. Praying together at lunch or early mornings is great, but if it's hard to get together, set a time to call each other and pray on the phone.