

The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Knowledge **Proverbs 1:7-9**

Scriptures for Today: Proverbs 1:7-9

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Introduction — The Foundation of Everything

The book of Proverbs is wisdom for daily life. Psalms teaches you how to worship. Job teaches you how to suffer. Proverbs teaches you how to live.

And right at the beginning of the book, before money is mentioned, before relationships are discussed, before warnings about adultery or laziness appear — God gives the foundation of everything in the book of Proverbs.

Verse 7 is the foundation of the entire book. If you misunderstand this verse, you will misunderstand everything that follows within the entire book.

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.”

The simple definition of knowledge is understanding what is true or knowing FACTS and understanding them correctly. It's not just hearing information. It's grasping what is real and accurate. "The fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of knowledge."

If I asked the question: "What's the beginning of knowledge?" Most people in this world would answer: "EDUCATION." But that's not what the Bible says. It's not education. It doesn't start with kindergarten. It doesn't start with elementary school. It doesn't start with middle school, high school, college, graduate school, or law school.

The beginning of knowledge. The fear of the LORD is THE beginning of knowledge. Not anything else. It is the fear of the Lord. This is where wisdom starts. Without wisdom and knowledge, you have nothing.

Section 1 — The Fear of the LORD

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Fear here does not mean panic. It means reverence. Respect. Recognition of authority. Submission.

To fear the LORD means you understand who He is. He is Creator. He is Judge. He is Holy. He is right. And you are not. That posture or attitude towards God is the beginning of knowledge. You can also clearly see the posture or attitude of some people towards this church. For example, children might not have the fear of the Lord. They may not have respect for authority.

Notice what the verse does not say. It does not say the fear of the LORD is advanced knowledge. It says it is the beginning of knowledge. Not the end of knowledge – the beginning of knowledge.

If a person does not fear God, they may gather information, but they do not truly understand life. Many of the so-called "intelligent" people out there believe that rocks collided and all of creation came from rocks. Many of the "smart" people out there believe we came from fish. The truth is, though, they are fools. The Bible says twice in Psalm 14:1 and Psalm 53:1, "The FOOL hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Think about this. Knowledge without God becomes pride. Knowledge without God becomes rebellion. Knowledge without God becomes destruction. You can have it all, but without God, you are finished.

Now look at the contrast or the difference in the second half of the verse: "But fools despise wisdom and instruction."

A fool in Proverbs is not someone with low IQ. It is someone who rejects correction. Someone who refuses instruction. Someone who thinks they already know. Many younger people are like this. Many have never done anything before, but they will tell you how much more they know about it than someone who has done before.

A fool rejects correction. We've all been fools before. We've all rejected correction. Fools refuse instruction. For example, we teach the Bible 4 times per week in this church for about 4 hours each week. Some people might sit here for 4 hours each week and refuse to learn anything. They may refuse instruction. And it's their choice. That's foolishness.

The dividing line is clear: The wise fear God and the fool despises wisdom, instruction, and correction. We all need correction. If we believe we are above that, we are being foolish. That's why we listen to the word of God and humble ourselves to His words.

For example, I can clearly show someone the word of God, very simply, and they can reject His words. Jesus says to receive everlasting life you simply believe on Him. The fool says, "Oh no, you have to change your life. You have to turn from all sin. You have to do this or that." That's foolishness.

And there's all kinds of examples. "A pastor must be the husband of one wife." The fool argues with God. "Oh no, a woman can be a pastor." The Bible says "Beware of dogs." The fool argues

with God. "Dogs are man's best friend." The Bible says God created all things by speaking. The fool argues with God. "Everything was created by a big bang." The fool doesn't understand that something had to already be there to create the big bang.

So again, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. If someone doesn't fear the Lord, how much knowledge do they actually have? They never even got to the beginning of knowledge. They think they know it all but yet they know nothing.

Section 2 — Parental Instruction

Proverbs 1:8

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Solomon now narrows the application of the fear of the Lord being the beginning of knowledge. The warning he is giving is now being sent directly to children. For example, I am the child of my father and mother. I still need to listen and have respect for my father and mother. Listen to what they are saying.

The fear of the LORD does not stay abstract or only in your head or only something you say. The fear of the Lord isn't just a feeling you have. The fear of the Lord will show up in the way that you live.

The fear of the Lord flows into the home. Do you see that verse? Fearing the Lord is equal to you having respect not only for the Lord but for your father and your mother.

The Bible says right there, "My son." This is very personal. Father to son. Wisdom is passed down. "Hear the instruction of thy father." That means listen. Not tolerate. Not roll your eyes. Not endure. Hear it. LISTEN. And I can say that up here over and over again and many still won't listen. "Hear the instruction" from the Bible. Please listen. Please hear.

"Forsake not the law of thy mother." Mother's teaching matters. This verse honors both parents. The father gives instruction. The mother gives the law. Consistent teaching and daily reinforcement. A father and a mother have a job to do. As a father and a mother, you must correct your children, teach your children, and instruct your children.

God designed the home as the first classroom. It wasn't a public school. The Bible doesn't say, "My son, hear the instruction of your school principal, and forsake not the law of thy classroom teacher." That's not in the Bible anywhere and this is one of the reasons the entire country is messed up.

According to God, who should be teaching the children? FATHER and MOTHER. The responsibility lies there. But look at what has happened. That responsibility has been taken from the parents and has been placed onto others. That is NOT God's design.

If children learn to fear the LORD at home, society stabilizes. This will change how you speak, how you treat people, how you handle money, what you watch, what you allow in the home, and how you respond to correction.

If children despise correction at home, chaos spreads everywhere. And it does. It's pure chaos.

Here's an example. It's not okay to throw your trash and dump your things all over this city. It's your responsibility to take care of your own trash. People around here think it's okay to just throw trash out the window, down the streets, and dump it on other people's properties. God created this earth, and He expects us to take care of it.

We need to fear the Lord in every way. Again, that means to reverence, to have deep respect, to honor, and to submit to the Lord and His ways. I believe fear of the Lord is very low with most people now. I believe, as a whole, we don't even know what honor and respect means any more. We need to do better.

Our world today is heading towards the exact same thing that we see in Genesis 6 right before the great flood: "That every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Wickedness is increasing because there is no fear of the Lord.

If there was fear of the Lord, the father would teach his children and the mother would teach her children. The women wouldn't go out and find some strange man to have children with to get benefits and then complain that the man doesn't do anything. You fornicated with him. If you had fear of the Lord, you wouldn't do that.

And then your children could have had a father and a mother teaching them the right things. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Without that fear, you know nothing. When the parents lead the way in the fear of the Lord, they teach the children that same honor and respect for God.

"My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother."

Section 3 — The Parental Crown

Proverbs 1:9

For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

Children and teenagers who rebel against their parents think that it's cool when it's actually one of the biggest shames in existence.

Obedience to godly parents is not humiliation. It is honor. "For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head." That means it beautifies your life. "And chains about thy neck." Not prison chains. Royal chains. Treasure. Good chains.

In ancient times, chains around the neck symbolized status and dignity. Solomon is saying this:

If you accept godly instruction, it will elevate you. It will protect you. It will mark you. People will see the difference. Wisdom makes you stand out in the right way. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all of this.

Instruction of the father and the law of thy mother shall be an ornament of GRACE unto THY HEAD, and chains about THY neck. That means their instruction and their teaching is very, very important to children. Without it, foolish children will grow up and become foolish adults. And that's what's happening all over this world.

We need to focus more on the fear of the Lord. We need to teach people to fear, honor, respect, and submit to God's words.

Let's look at a couple of examples of fearing the Lord. When you see what God says in the Bible, you simply believe it and do it.

Ephesians 4:32

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Be kind to each other. Forgive one another. God says to forgive one another. Do you see that? If you fear the Lord, you will believe that and do what He says. FORGIVE. Let it go. Move on. Don't hold grudges. Just move on. When you follow that, this is called "fear of the Lord."

Deuteronomy 23:17-18

There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. 18 Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

The whore and the sodomite or homosexual is called an abomination within the Bible. God is highly, highly against whoredom and homosexuality. Now, you can believe that and do be with God on that and FEAR THE LORD or not.

Leviticus 18:22

Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

You can fear the Lord or you can come up with all these ways around that verse as most churches in today's world do.

1 Timothy 2:12

But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

In church, this is what God commands. You can believe that or not. You can fear the Lord or not. Or you can try to slither your way out of that verse.

Ephesians 5:22

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

So many people hate the Scriptures today. So many wives won't do that right there. They can't, and they won't. The fear of the Lord is not important to them. Their level of knowledge is at zero. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

It's very wise to see the words of the Bible, believe them, and submit to them.

Practical Applications

1. **Start with the fear of God.** If you do not fear the LORD, nothing else will make sense. Make sure your life begins with reverence for Him.
2. **Do not reject correction.** If you get defensive every time someone corrects you, that is foolishness according to Proverbs. Wise people listen and adjust.
3. **Parents matter.** If you are a parent, your instruction carries weight. Do not be silent. Teach your children the Word of God.
4. **Children must choose to listen.** Hearing is a decision. You can hear and obey, or hear and ignore. The outcome will show later.

Conclusion

Proverbs 1:7–9 lays the groundwork for everything else. Fear God. Reject foolish pride. Listen to godly parents. Accept instruction. If you remove the fear of the LORD, knowledge becomes dangerous. Without the fear of the Lord, you will become prideful and you'll be destroyed.

If you despise instruction, wisdom never grows. But if you fear God and receive correction, it becomes a crown—something visible, something honorable, something lasting. This is the beginning.

And if you get the beginning right, the rest of life can be built correctly. And the rest of the book of Proverbs teaches us how to live life. Remember, this book teaches you how to live your life IN the fear of the Lord.

Let's pray.