



Theme: Summer Wisdom in Proverbs and James

"The Problem with Sin"

We have a great new way for you to get these Meditation Moments each day directly to your phone. Just text "**med moments**" to **970-426-0700** to receive the **daily Meditation Moment** each morning and start your day grounded in faith and peace.

Weekly Memory Verse:

Evil people are trapped by sin, but the righteous escape, shouting for joy.

– Proverbs 29:6

Meditation Moments for Monday, July 6 – Read **Proverbs 29 and 30**, which contains the memory verse for this week. Which verses speak to you?



Verse 1 talks about the importance of receiving criticism. It points to the need to check our pride, which is a big theme in the Proverbs and is mentioned directly in verse 23. How do you respond when criticized? Does your pride ever get in the way of admitting you are wrong? Verses 7 and 14 speak of justice and concern for the poor. What does justice for the poor look like for you? How do you treat people you consider poor? In many ways, these verses also have our pride at the core as we sometimes look down on those we think have lower status than ourselves. Can you invite God to help you see people as God sees them, as humans in need of dignity and care?



Proverbs 29:18 is more familiar in the King James, "Without a vision the people will perish." When did you experience this to be true? Proverbs 30 has a bit different literary style than the rest, including a form that is much like a riddle, asking questions about objects that seem strange. It requires some pondering to consider the connections made in the Proverb. Consider the message of 30:7-9. How have you seen the truth of these verses in the lives of others, or in your own life? Are you willing to pray these verses? Why or why not?

Prayer: Gracious God, help me to let go of pride so I can see others the way you see them. May I not be trapped by sin, my broken places, but instead find the freedom in you to shout for joy. Amen.

Tuesday, July 7 – Read aloud our memory verse for the week, **Proverbs 29:6**. Read **Proverbs 10**. Notice this section begins with the title, *Proverbs of Solomon*, implying perhaps the first nine chapters were an introduction to the book added later. Scholars believe the next 12 chapters of Proverbs are the oldest in the entire book. These now take the standard form of couplets addressing a wide variety of topics. Notice most of these verses take the form of “antithetical parallelism,” where the first line makes a statement and the second line gives its opposite. They are parallel, but opposite truths, and by contrasting the two it drives the point of the proverb home.

 In Proverbs 10, which of these have you personally learned by experience? Which of these Proverbs speak most to you today? One common theme through this chapter is our speech or our lips and the power they have to do good or bring harm. What instructions do Proverbs 10 give us about our words? Do you have the mouth of the righteous and wise, or the wicked and foolish?

 Verse 12 reads, “Hatred stirs up quarrels, but love makes up for all offenses.” When have you seen this truth in your own life and in the world? Read **James 3:1-12** and pray that God will help you control your tongue. How does controlling the tongue tie into our memory verse??

Prayer: God of Wisdom, guide my tongue and my heart as interact with others. May my words be a blessing to you and bring beauty and joy into the world. Amen.

Wednesday, July 8 – Read aloud **Proverbs 29:6**, the memory verse for this week. As you prepare to read chapter 11, one of the major themes of this chapter is the wise view and use of riches.

 Read **Proverbs 11**, listening for God to speak to you. What does Proverbs 11 teach us about how the wise and foolish approach riches and their possessions? What is a “reckless word”? Have you spoken any of these to others recently? Ask for forgiveness and help to bring healing with your words

 Read **Proverbs 12**. Which of these verses speak to you today? The focus of this chapter is comparing the “wicked” to the “godly.” Have you every experienced someone doing something that felt “wicked” to you? How did you respond? Have you ever done something to another person that might be seen as “wicked”? Did you try to make it right? Why or why not? The profound idea is that when we engage in, or experience something “wicked” or what we might call sinful, we get separated from God, others and ourselves. Invite God to help you see those places and how you might reconnect, knowing that our God is a forgiving God that offers grace freely.

Prayer: God, worry can weigh me down. Help me hear your encouraging words that can cheer my heart. May I be godly and give good advice and encouraging words to my friends, remembering that the way of the godly leads to life; that path does not lead to death. Amen.

Thursday, July 9 – Read once again your memory verse, **Proverbs 29:6**.



Read **Proverbs 13** slowly. Pause to ponder two or three of the proverbs in greater detail. Verse 12 lands right in the middle of this chapter that speaks much about what to do with wealth and how pride can lead to destruction. It reads, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life.” Why do you think this verse is in the middle of this chapter? What does it say about the importance of hope and dreams? When have you had a dream fulfilled? When have you had a dream crushed? What gives you hope even when times are tough?



Read **Proverbs 14**. Pay careful attention to verses 10 and 13 which speak to us about heavy hearts and grief. Do you have some grief that is covered up right now? Part of being wise is being honest about that grief and bringing it to God for healing. What griefs do you have that need to be given to God? Verses 17 and 29 speak about “quick-tempered” people. Are you able to control your temper? Anger and sadness are different sides of the same emotional coin. Is there sadness beneath anger you might feel? Let’s bring those complicated emotions of anger and fear to God in prayer. How is verse 27 true?

Prayer: *Gracious God, I bring to you my sadness and anger today (name those in the silence.) Calm my heart and give me peace when I grieve, remembering that the wise bring their troubles to You for healing. Amen.*

Friday, July 10 – Recite this week’s memory verse, **Proverbs 29:6**, once again. You’ll notice several themes that show up regularly in the Proverbs. This tells us that 3000 plus years ago people dealt with some of the same issues we deal with today! The themes of wise use of our words and discipline or correction and our need to be teachable both are prominent. We see the two paths contrasted: wisdom and folly, or righteousness and wickedness



Read **Proverbs 15**. In verses 16, 17 and 27 we see another major theme which contrasts the wise and foolish approaches to money. You might go verse by verse through this chapter and pray each verse. As you read these verses it begs a question. Do I have generous in heart or one that is closed and hard? What keeps me from being generous (fear, skepticism, worry, etc.)? Pray about your commitment to God through Summit Church or any other charities or ministries that God is calling you to support. Consider your goals in this area of your life and God’s will for you as you grow closer to God by becoming a generous person.



Read **Proverbs 16**. One major theme in today’s reading is the plans we make – a fool makes plans without considering God, but the wise commit to God all their ways. What they do is with right motives. They seek to please God. Where do you see this issue of our plans and paths as you read Proverbs 16? Pray and invite God to point you toward one or two verses that you most need to hear in this chapter. One of the verses you will want to commit to memory is verse 31! It will come in handy as you grow older! Write down those Proverbs that spoke

most clearly to your life situation or the things you wrestle with and focus your prayers on them.

Prayer: *Lord God, may I always remember that my possessions and stuff are temporary, and it ALL belongs to you...I just get to use it and give it. Help me to be generous in this life so my heart might be open to your plans for eternity. Amen.*

Saturday, July 11 – Read once again your memory verse, **Proverbs 29:6**. How has it felt to read that this week?

 Read **Proverbs 17**. There are times that Proverbs that don't describe how things should be, but how they sometimes are – for example, verse 8. Bribes are regularly condemned in the Bible, which makes this verse a bit perplexing unless it is a statement of how things sometimes work. But even so, we would expect a follow-up line reminding us that those who bribe will perish in the end. This is why we read any given Proverb in the light of the entire book, such as verse 23 which seems to be a follow up to verse 8. What do you think the writer is trying to say about bribes? Who does that apply to your life?

 Verse 13 reads, "If you repay good with evil, evil will never leave your house." This is a theme repeated in the New Testament when Jesus tells us not to repay evil for evil but repay evil with good. Do you find that hard to do in a world that often says we should get even? What other verses spoke to you today? Verse 22 is a call for us to have a cheerful disposition for others. Do you find that challenging? Invite God to live into any of these sayings that seem difficult to follow, remembering always that Jesus went to a cross to show us how much he loves us and forgives us when we get it wrong.

Prayer: *Forgiving God, you tell us in the Proverbs that; "Anyone who loves to quarrel loves sin; anyone who trusts in high walls invites disaster," and that, "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength." May I remember these words as I am tempted to react by quarreling or building walls when I don't get my way. You remind me that, "Sensible people keep their eyes glued on wisdom, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth." My I keep my eyes focused on You so I discover wisdom and joy. Amen.*