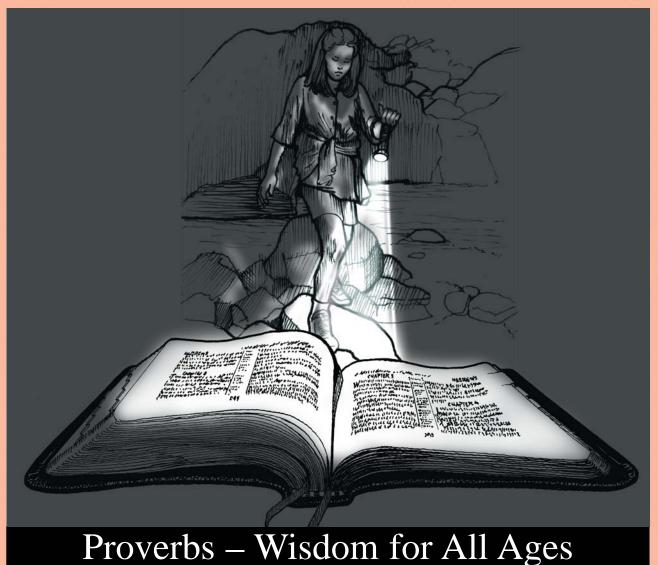
CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS

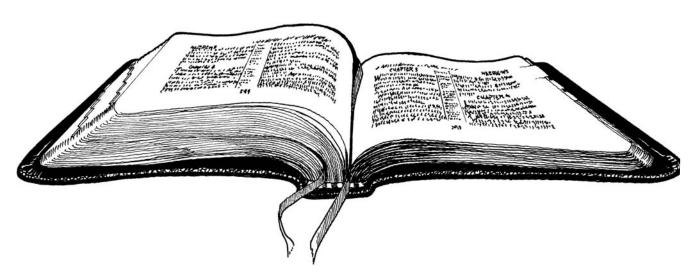


LEVEL 6

LESSON 10

Proverbs

Wisdom for All Ages



veryone experiences problems, difficulties and hard decisions in life. Regardless of age, a person will face temptation to say or do the wrong thing. Maybe you are facing some difficulties in your life right now.

Does someone want you to cheat, lie or steal for him? Have you been tempted to smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol so others will think you are "cool"? If you have said no to the people trying to pressure you into doing wrong things, do they call you names and make fun of you?

Do you get along with your parents, brothers, sisters or other members of your family? Do you wish you had more money, were bigger, stronger or more attractive? Is it hard for you to get good grades, or do people make fun of you for getting good grades?

Sometimes you may feel there are not any answers or solutions that make sense. But there are! An instruction book exists that tells you how to live a happy, peaceful, successful life. The Author of that book wants every human being to learn the way that will make life free from worry. That instruction book is the Bible—and its Author is God!

The Bible is filled with principles that will help you to deal with problems, difficulties and hard decisions. It will teach you the way that will bring happiness and contentment into your life. The wisdom of the Bible is the wisdom of God, so it will always bring the right results. One book of the Bible that you will find especially helpful in making many of life's tough decisions is Proverbs.

What Proverbs Are

Proverbs are short sayings that focus on using common sense and good judgment when dealing with life, the world and the way God works. They represent the attitude of balanced living, understanding, making right choices—and they teach useful lessons. Many proverbs are easy to remember because they sum up in a few words important points of wisdom.

Most cultures around the world have common sayings, or proverbs. Some have value; some do not. Some are true; some are false. But you can be sure that the proverbs given in the Bible are true. They will help you to make right decisions and to solve problems because they are inspired by God (II Timothy 3:16), and it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18)!

Using Biblical Proverbs Daily

Maybe you have had an argument with a friend. Perhaps you hang around the wrong crowd, but do not know how to remove yourself. Or maybe you sometimes say the wrong thing at the wrong time. Perhaps you feel adults in your life just do not understand you.

You may be surprised to learn that the book of Proverbs was written especially for you! The wisdom in its verses will work for *any* person of *any* age; but it was especially written for young people. And if you are willing to study this book, take to heart the valuable information it offers you, and put its wisdom into action, you will find that your life becomes less stressful, more peaceful—and much happier.

First, let's prove that this book is written for you—a young person. Be sure to look up each verse and read it for yourself. When you find a word of which you are unclear of the meaning, look up its definition in a dictionary. (As an added aid, words given inside brackets are added to help clarify the meaning of words or phrases.)

- Proverbs 3:11 "My son, do not despise the chastening [discipline] of the LORD, nor detest His correction."
- Proverbs 3:21 "My son, let them not depart from your eyes—keep sound wisdom and discretion."
- Proverbs 4:1 "Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, and give attention to know understanding."

Also write out Proverbs 2:1-9 and 3:1-2.

How To Apply Proverbs

Someone is very angry and yelling at you. How should you respond to calm the situation? Here's what Proverbs 15:1 recommends: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." You agree to do something for a friend you know you should not do. Proverbs 6:2-4 says, "You are

snared by the words of your mouth; you are taken by the words of your mouth. So do this, my son, and deliver yourself; for you have come into the hand of your friend: go and humble yourself; plead with your friend. Give no sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids." Also write out Proverbs 20:16 and Proverbs 27:13.

Two teams want to play ball, but both insist they should bat first. What is the fastest and fairest way to decide? Proverbs 18:18 suggests, "Casting lots causes contentions to cease, and keeps the mighty apart." For example, a coin toss would help settle the argument.

Maybe you think that if you had a lot of money you would be happier. Proverbs 15:16 says, "Better is a little with the fear [reverence, respect] of the LORD, than great treasure with trouble."

How can you have really good friends? Proverbs 18:24 says, "A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

The Gift of Wisdom

Whom did God use to record most of the wisdom found in Proverbs? "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel" (Proverbs 1:1). And we are also told that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs (I Kings 4:32).

When Solomon became king of Israel, he loved God and obeyed His laws, just as his father, King David, had done. God told Solomon in a dream that He was going to grant him a gift: "Ask! What shall I give you?" (I Kings 3:5).

Solomon requested, "Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?" (vs. 9).

God was very pleased with Solomon's request: "Then God said to him: Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you

before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days" (vs. 11-13).

"And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men-than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations" (I Kings 4:29-31). Kings from around the world who had heard about Solomon's wisdom sent their representatives to hear his wisdom (vs. 34).

Solomon wrote a collection of Proverbs that, today, you can read and study in the Bible. You can use this to become very wise! God promises, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).

How Proverbs Are Useful

In order to truly learn from the book of Proverbs, you will need to read and study it more than one time. Memorizing many of the verses will prove useful when you are faced with tough decisions.

God defines the usefulness of Proverbs in the following verses: "To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive [recognize] the words of understanding, to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity [fairness]; to give prudence [tact] to the simple, to the young man [or young woman] knowledge and discretion [good judgment]" (Proverbs 1:2-4).

The proverbs teach us how to live and act in every circumstance, as well as warn about problems we will face in life.

Where is the beginning of knowledge according to God's Word? "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7).

What does it mean to fear the Lord? "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil, pride, and arrogance, and the evil way and the perverse [wicked] mouth I hate" (Proverbs 8:13).

What will fearing the Lord help us to do? "In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity [sin]; and by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil" (Proverbs 16:6).

God gives three basic things to help those who strive to live His way of life and obey His laws: "For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6).

On the Way to Understanding

When you first attended school, you probably did not know how to read, write or do simple math problems. You had to begin by learning the basics—the alphabet, numbers and simple words. It is much the same when you begin to study God's Word. At first, you will understand only a few verses; then, after more study, you will understand a few more, and so on. This Lesson helps you to begin to understand the book of Proverbs.

The Bible is a large book, containing approximately 750,000 words that form thousands of verses. Since there are many different versions of the Bible, which one is best? The original *King James Version* (KJV) translated the original Hebrew and Greek texts into English, but it uses English from 500 to 600 years ago. Some of these words have little or no meaning for us today. The *New King James Version* (NKJV) uses modern English, which makes it easier to understand for most. An example is the use of the phrase "hoary head" in Proverbs 16:31 in the KJV; it is translated better in the NKJV as "silver-haired head."

Many times, a particular verse in the Bible can be better understood by reading it in context—reading the verses that come before it and after it. However, in the book of Proverbs, many verses stand alone, so context would not add to their meaning. Do not expect to understand everything the first time you study it. Remember the example of learning the basics when you first started school. Think about those you do understand, and ask your parents to help with those you do not yet understand.

As we saw at the beginning of this Lesson, Solomon addressed many of the proverbs to "my

son." He was handing these words of wisdom down to his son, just as his father, King David, had given him advice while he was growing up. However, the proverbs are not just for men or boys. The Bible is for *all* people of *all* ages—and for all times!

Reach for Your Dreams

Does following the way of God seem hard to you? You might be tempted to feel this way, especially when you observe your friends who do not care about studying the Bible and are not worried about whether they are pleasing God. What does God say about choosing a way that may seem right and easiest at the time?

Proverbs 14:12 says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." This verse is repeated again, word for word, in Proverbs 16:25. When God repeats something, it means it is very important and needs *extra* emphasis.

You may be tempted just to go along with the crowd. Because they do not know what God expects, they will not know that what you are doing is not pleasing to God. But *you* know better, and more importantly, *God knows* that you know better! You might think you are getting away with breaking God's Sabbath by playing sports with your school team, accepting and giving Christmas gifts to friends, or cursing or smoking when your parents are not around. After all, you are only having fun, right? Wrong! True fun and true happiness comes from obeying God.

Proverbs counsels you not to envy those who behave wickedly, but to continue to respect the Lord all the time. By doing so, you will have a wonderful future ahead of you: "Do not let your heart envy sinners, but be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day; for surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off" (Proverbs 23:17-18).

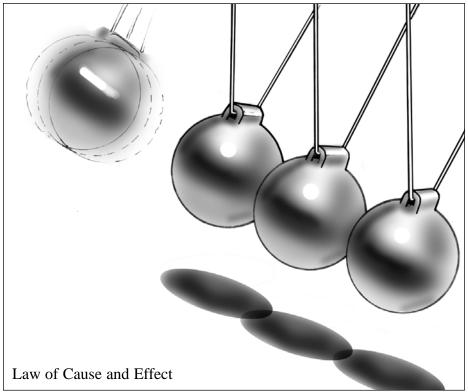
God promises a reward to all who live His way of life. If you follow God's Way into adulthood, your ultimate reward will be the opportunity to be born as a spirit being into the God Family—and live FOREVER. Your reward in this life will be peace of mind, happiness, success and hope. Make a list of the hopes and dreams you would like to reach in the future. Keep it handy, and remind yourself often that living

God's Way makes it possible to be truly successful!

Those who break God's laws usually have little concern about breaking the laws of man, too. Besides creating much trouble and unhappiness for themselves and their families, their lives are filled with stress, worry, poor health and depression. Smokers might ignore warnings, but scientists have proven that smokers have a greater risk of developing breathing problems such as asthma, bronchitis, and pneumonia; and the threat of lung cancer or emphysema is ever-present in their lives. Are any of these problems worth having in return for supposed moments of pleasure?

"Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them, for their heart devises violence, and their lips talk of troublemaking" (Proverbs 24:1-2). In addition, verse 14 offers, "So shall the knowledge of wisdom be to your soul; if you have found it, there is a prospect [future], and your hope will not be cut off."





"Do not fret because of evildoers, or be envious of the wicked: for there will be no prospect for the evil man; the lamp of the wicked will be put out" (Proverbs 24:19-20). The Word of God is called a "lamp to my feet and a light to my path" in Psalms 119:105. If you have ever been in a room when the light goes out unexpectedly, you can better appreciate the importance of not having to stumble around in darkness.

Paying the Price

Would a person rob a bank if he thought he was going to get caught? Does a student who cheats on a test think the teacher will find out? Anyone who does something wrong has convinced himself he is not going to get caught; he sincerely believes he will get away with it. What does God say about that?

- "Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled to the full with their own fancies [schemes]" (Proverbs 1:31).
- "The labor of the righteous leads to life, the wages of the wicked to sin" (Proverbs 10:16).
- "He who earnestly seeks good finds favor, but trouble will come to him who seeks evil" (Proverbs 11:27).
 - Write out Proverbs 26:27; 5:22-23; 13:21.

The book of Proverbs addresses the cause and effect of a person's actions. When you break God's Law, God's Law will break you—just as surely as if you jump off a roof you are going to hit the ground, and possibly die! No one is able to escape paying the penalty of choosing to do the wrong thing.

Can you count on being rewarded for doing the right thing—obeying God's laws? Proverbs 11:19 says, "As righteousness leads to life, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death."

Notice several of the many ways your life will be enriched by living God's Way:

- You have freedom from feelings of guilt and worry. Peace of mind comes from knowing you are making wise choices.
- By following the laws of God and man, you have freedom from being arrested by the police and having a criminal record.
- A deep sense of happiness results from knowing God is on your side.
- You can take all your thoughts, hopes, wishes and dreams to God in prayer, even those things you may not feel comfortable talking about with another human being.

Make a list of other blessings you can think of that result from living God's Way. Keep the list handy, and add to it as you think of other blessings.

Peer Pressure

Once you make up your mind to follow God's Way, be prepared to receive opinions from your friends and relatives trying to persuade you to give it up. This is not unusual. Nearly everyone who decides to live God's Way must face some opposition. One reason is so that God can see whether a person is serious about obeying Him, or if it is just a passing fad.

You may find yourself being tempted more often than you were before you decided to obey God. Decide now that you will not give in to the

pressure. Set your mind and heart to live the rest of your life as God wants you to—no matter what others may say. Here's what Proverbs 1:10 advises: "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent."

When you realize you are being tempted, do not hesitate to put distance between you and the temptation *immediately*. Get out of temptation's way! Once you are able to recognize temptations, you will be better able to avoid them. For example, do not go to a friend's party if you know they will be using alcohol or drugs.

Even if you think you are strong enough to resist temptation, God gives this advice: "A prudent [wise] man foresees evil and hides himself; but the simple pass on and are punished" (Proverbs 22:3). This same verse is repeated in Proverbs 27:12. Remember that when God repeats something, it means He believes it is very important. Do not fool yourself into thinking you are smarter, stronger or wiser than the God who inspired these words of wisdom!

As you begin to practice living God's Way, recognizing temptations will become easier for you. And do not forget that God is only a prayer away. When you are feeling overwhelmed, or you are afraid you may slip and fall, be sure to instantly and silently ask God, in prayer, for help. You will be pleased at how much help you receive as you begin to put your trust in God.

Realize that you will make some mistakes. Just as you were not able to spell every word in the dictionary after your first day of school, learning to live God's Way takes time. As you study your Bible, and pray daily to God for wisdom, guidance and help to overcome temptations, you will grow wisdom's "muscle." You will become stronger and more able to avoid bad situations.

When you do make a mistake, determine not to make the same one ever again; then go to God and ask Him to forgive you and give you enough strength not to repeat it. We have seen from reading some of the Proverbs that God is waiting to give you wisdom, understanding and strength!

"Can a man take fire to his bosom [against his chest], and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be seared?" asks Proverbs 6:27-28. Do not give yourself permission to slip into temptation thinking you will not get hurt because later you will simply ask God to forgive

you. That will not work. You *will* get burned. Write out Proverbs 4:14-15, 25-27.

In Matthew 7:14, Jesus Christ tells us that "narrow is the gate, and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." You have been given the wonderful opportunity to be one of the few that Christ was talking about. That should make your future very exciting to look forward to.

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe" (Proverbs 18:10). You should now have a better understanding of what this Proverb can mean in your life.

Do Not Be Fooled

We have all been fooled, or tricked, by someone. But sometimes we can be fooled into thinking something is right when actually it is very wrong. Satan the devil likes to use this tactic of deception to cause God's people to stumble. In effect, he fools them into thinking they will not get caught in a sin, or will not have to pay the penalty for breaking God's laws. Keeping that in mind, let's examine what the book of Proverbs has to say when describing a fool:

- "The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the legacy [inheritance] of fools" (Proverbs 3:35).
- "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise" (Proverbs 12:15).
- "Fools mock at sin, but among the upright there is favor" (Proverbs 14:9).
 - Write out Proverbs 1:22; 15:5; 18:6.

A fool *chooses* not to behave wisely, regardless if he knows the difference between right and wrong. God says a fool willingly allows Satan, or friends, to pressure him into choosing to do the wrong thing.

Saying the Right Thing

Wisdom entails knowing the right thing to say and when to say it. The book of Proverbs has advice to give on this:

• "In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise" (Proverbs 10:19).

- "The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil" (Proverbs 15:28).
- "Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; when he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive [intelligent]" (Proverbs 17:28).
- Write out Proverbs 10:18; 11:9, 12; 13:3.

Learn Good Work Habits Now

Most young people are expected to keep their rooms neat, their beds made and their belongings put away when not in use. Look around your room. Is it a mess? Could you do a better job of keeping things clean and organized?

You may think that doing chores is a waste of time, and not very much fun. Responsibilities given to you now by your parents will teach you good habits. Good habits learned now will carry over into adulthood, when you have a job and earn a living.

Employers look for responsible people to hire—those who take care of what they are given, do the job they are hired to do, and keep their work area neat and uncluttered.

The book of Proverbs has a lot to say about developing good work ethics. Let's take a look:

- "Go to the ant, you sluggard [lazy person]! Consider her ways, and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in summer, and gathers her food in harvest" (Proverbs 6:6-8).
- "The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent [hard-working] shall be made rich" (Proverbs 13:4).
 - Write out Proverbs 10:26; 14:23; 15:19.

Be Rich!

When you think of the word "rich," you probably think of someone who has a lot of money, drives an expensive car, lives in a mansion and enjoys expensive clothes and jewelry. That is the way people usually define who is rich. But how does God define wealth and riches?



- "Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains correction, but he who regards a rebuke will be honored" (Proverbs 13:18).
- "Better is a little with righteousness, than vast revenues [huge income] without justice" (Proverbs 16:8).
- "How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver" (Proverbs 16:16).
- Write out Proverbs 10:4; 11:28; 13:11, 23; 14:4, 23; 15:27.

The Value of Correction

No one likes to be corrected—or receive punishment—for something he did wrong. However, correction helps us to understand more clearly what the correct decision should have been, and it helps us to remember the lesson for the next time we face a similar situation.

- "My son, do not despise the chastening [discipline] of the LORD, nor detest His correction" (Proverbs 3:11).
- "Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid" (Proverbs 12:1).
- "Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool" (Proverbs 17:10).
- Write out Proverbs 13:1; 15:10; 25:12.

Studying the book of Proverbs will help you to make wise decisions when facing whether to do right or wrong. Solomon was a loving father who instructed his children with the Proverbs; and God is your loving Father who instructs you—His child—through these same words of



wisdom that He inspired Solomon to write. God would rather have you learn valuable lessons without having to experience the pain and suffering of doing the wrong thing. If you listen to your parents, teachers, ministers in God's Church and God's advice through the wisdom of the Proverbs, you will begin to build success that will last your entire life.

"My son, keep my words and treasure my commands within you, keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye [loved one], bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart" (Proverbs 7:1-3).

Wisdom Versus Flattery

Solomon often speaks of wisdom as if it were a human being. "Say to wisdom, 'You are my sister.' And call understanding your nearest kin, that they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words" (Proverbs 7:4-5). This strange woman, or stranger, is anyone—or anything—that draws you away from proper conduct, or who wants to take advantage of you and lead you into trouble by using flattery,





which means telling you what you want to hear. Flattery is *never* sincere. Flattery's main purpose is to persuade you to ignore using good judgment or common sense when making a decision.

Verse 7 says, "And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, a young man devoid of [totally lacking] understanding." And verse 21 continues, "With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him [led him off course]."

Wisdom will help you to avoid bad situations, whereas listening to flattery will bring trouble and pain into your life! Proverbs 7:26 tells us, "For she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men." Flattery has brought many victims to ruin. Now reread these verses and substitute the word "flattery" everywhere you see the word "she." This will make the meaning crystal clear!

Good Character

Proverbs 31:10-31 describes the qualities of a woman who has good character, high moral standards and exercises good judgment. She is called a virtuous woman. She demonstrates the qualities of intelligence, productivity, kindness and generosity. Young ladies should aspire to develop the qualities described in these verses, and young men should look for young ladies who demonstrate these traits. In fact, such a woman is considered so priceless that "she is worth more than rubies" (vs. 10).

A virtuous woman has learned the basic principles of wisdom, knowledge and understanding contained in the book of Proverbs—and she puts them into practice in her life. She knows the difference between right and wrong. When she makes a decision, she chooses the right thing, then follows through by doing it.

A virtuous woman is a hard worker (vs. 13). She provides meals for her family and takes care of her house (vs. 15, 19, 27). She is kind and helpful (vs. 20). She is careful about what she says (vs. 26). She respects and obeys God (vs. 30). This is the kind of person that other people want to be like (vs. 31).

Put Proverbs to Work

This Lesson has given you a start on studying the book of Proverbs. If you read one chapter a day, at the end of 31 days, you will have read through all the Proverbs. Try to apply to your life at least one proverb each day. You will begin to see the wisdom of the proverbs take shape in situations in your life—and your life will change for the better. You will be taking giant steps toward gaining wisdom!

You might want to study a particular subject. A Bible concordance can help you to locate all the verses on a particular topic, such as money, wealth or riches. You might even want to mark with a dollar sign these verses in the margin of your Bible. Once you have read all the verses in Proverbs that are listed in the concordance, you may want to find verses in other books of the Bible on that topic as well. Start a notebook, and be sure to write all the



verses down so you can go back and study them later. Be creative by putting identifying symbols in the margin of your Bible next to verses of a particular topic so you can quickly locate them. For instance, you might want to mark with the symbol of lips verses that pertain to watching what you say.

Proverbs 16:20 says, "He who heeds the word wisely will find good, and whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he." Let the Proverbs be your guide to wisdom and to a happy life!

Test Your Memory:

1) What is the instruction book that tells every human being how to live a happy, peaceful and successful life?

2) God told Solomon that He would give him a	gift.
What did Solomon ask for?	

- 3) True or False: Because Solomon wrote them as instructions for his son, the Proverbs are only useful to men and boys.
- 4) The way that seems right to a person leads to what?
- 5) When you are tempted to do the wrong thing, what is the first thing you should do?

6) According to the Bible, what is a fool?	_
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7)	God	tells	us	that	wisdom	is	better	thar
				and				

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BIBLE MEMORY: Proverbs 15:29; 22:3; James 1:5

Answers From the Book of Proverbs

You may have questions about how to deal with problems at home or in school. Those questions can be answered by reading the book of Proverbs and applying them to your own situation. Match the verses at the bottom with the problems that could be avoided if the Proverbs were applied in your life.

bottom with the problems that could be avoided if the Proverbs were applied in your me.									
1)	Can you secretly do v	wrong things and not b	be affected by them?						
2)									
3)	3) Is that CD you really want worth stealing if it costs your freedom?								
	Being friends with someone who shoplifts can hurt your reputation. People will think								
ĺ	you steal too. Simply being with a thief can get you arrested.								
5)	5) When you hear about something that someone else did in school is it smart to spread the								
	tale without knowing the truth of the matter?								
6)	6) Your friend wants to get a tattoo. Should you keep your opinion to yourself or try to								
	encourage him not to go through with it?								
7)	7) You are dealing with a problem you know your parents will scold you about. Should you								
	go to them for advice anyway or keep it to yourself?								
8)	8) You have made aquaintances with an intelligent student at school and want to become								
friends, but he delights in ranting against the government and picking fights over									
politics. Should you become his friend?									
9) Should you listen to others gossiping about someone else and then pass it on?									
10	10) Is it wise to take sides when two people argue?								
_									
Pr	overbs 6:28; 15:3	Proverbs 17:22	Proverbs 22:24-25	Proverbs 16:8					
Proverbs 16:28 Proverbs 27:17		Proverbs 27:17	Proverbs 12:1; 13:18; 18:15	Proverbs 29:24; 10:7; 22:1					
Pr	overbs 26:22	Proverbs 26:17							