



Devotional

April 12 - June 27

forward, we sit and lament. Luckily, God has excellent night vision, and even when it's too dark for us to see, the Light is there, waiting to offer comfort and guidance - a search light for our soul - getting us back on the way everlasting.

Prayer: O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know all my dark places, and yet you still love me. Help me to live in your love and follow your ways, because I am made in your image, fearfully and wonderfully made. Amen.

WEEK NINE (JUNE 7–13)

Day 159: June 7, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 4:1–5:23

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 3:21–35

There is no quicker way to “utter ruin” than our unwillingness to hear hard truths about ourselves, and a refusal to be corrected. Openness to critique is a discipline that draws the line between wisdom and wickedness. (Prov. 5:11-14) How might you be more open to helpful critique?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 160: June 8, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 6:1–7:27

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 8:1–11

Proverbs 6:16-19 names seven abominable sins. Considering and living out their opposites constitute the best way to live: humility, truthfulness, self-sacrifice, love, discipline, integrity, and peace making. What will you do to incorporate these virtues into your life?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 161: June 9, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 8:1–9:18

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 8:12–36

In these Proverbs, God’s wisdom is personified as a person you should get to know. So just like starting any other relationship, getting to know God’s wisdom requires being attentive, humble, eager to be in its presence and willing to be vulnerable and real. How can you get to know God better today?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 162: June 10, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 10:1–11:31

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 9:1–18

Proverbs 10 starts the book’s “Goofus and Gallant” section: each verse is a Do vs. Don’t. It reminds us that the righteous life is a constant choice to honor God and not to honor self. A good example is from verse 12: “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.” Which of the “don’t” qualities do you need to work on?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 163: June 11, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 12:1–13:25

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 10:1–13

Proverbs 12:16-26 is a master class on the power of speech. Words can do great harm, but they can also bring healing (v.18), joy (v.20), delight (v.22), cheer for the anxious (25), and good advice (26). How can your words be less like a sword and more like a salve (v.18)?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 164: June 12, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 14:1–35

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 10:14–32

Proverbs 12:13-15 gives three ways to honor God: Control your anger, Care for the poor, Conduct yourself with integrity. In other words: guard the emotions no one else can see, care for those no one else cares for and do good even if no one else is watching. Which of these areas do you need to work on the most?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 165: June 13, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 15:1–33

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 15:1–14

Proverbs 15 has seven practical insights for daily life: Don't be lazy, watch your words, be open to correction, don't be boastful, be slow to anger, be of good cheer. But most important: love is all that matters. How might you go "seven-for-seven" today.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

June 7–13, 2020: Weekly Devotional by Carleen Boyer

How is my life supposed to be lived? Am I wise? Am I foolish?

How can I develop skills for living well?

As usual, there are no simple answers in 2020, just as there were none when Proverbs was written.

Proverbs was written to help us understand human life, its problems, and its contradictions. In chapter 8, wisdom is personified as a woman named Wisdom. Giving wisdom human qualities helps us find a link between God and humans. The rich prose of Proverbs help us find the differences between wisdom and foolishness. The language contains carefully chosen words to convey ideas for us to live our lives.

Proverbs can be seen as a handbook of sound advice, a tradition from the Near East where writings can be found full of wise sayings. This book about goodness and justice gives us God's invitation to learn about a life aimed at making good choices, a life of virtue, integrity, and generosity. As Methodists, virtue, integrity and generosity are solid attributes of a life well-lived.

By the middle of the Book of Proverbs, it is clear that life is too complex for simple formulas. None of us will be perfect, but it helps to have a guide. At this point it is useful to remember and rely on the wisdom of John Wesley, as well.

Let us choose Wesley's rule as our prayer:

*Do all the good you can, by all the means you can
in all the ways you can, in all the places you can
to all the people you can, as long as you ever can. Amen*

WEEK TEN (JUNE 14–20)

Day 166: June 14, 2020

Full Plan: Proverbs 16:1–33

Abbreviated Plan: Proverbs 15:15–32

Pride, arrogance, haughtiness, and a boastful spirit are denounced throughout Proverbs. It's the opposite of a wise life, an abomination to God (16:15) and a precursor to destruction (16:18). Do a self-check today. How are you thinking too highly of yourself?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life: