

Marty
Machowski



Wise

10-Minute
Family Devotions
in Proverbs

Up

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“In *Wise Up*, Marty Machowski has given parents a thoughtful, creative, compelling, gospel-centered resource to train their kids in biblical wisdom and Christ-exalting living. Marty’s love for his readers and the Savior are obvious throughout, and I was overjoyed that Sovereign Grace Music could partner with New Growth Press for this project. If you’re a parent looking for help with family devotions, this is a gold mine.”

—**Bob Kauflin**, Director of Sovereign Grace Music

“*Wise Up* by Marty Machowski is an excellent resource for family devotions. Over the course of twelve weeks, he provides engaging lessons that help families explore the wisdom of Proverbs in a five-day-a-week format. *Wise Up* uses songs, purposeful activities, and probing questions to draw families into the Bible, allowing them to grow closer to one another as they grow closer to God. Of all the activities we can do with our children, family devotions are the one opportunity we cannot afford to miss!”

—**Melissa Kruger**, Women’s Ministry Coordinator at Uptown Church PCA; author of *The Envy of Eve: Finding Contentment in a Covetous World* and *Walking with God in the Season of Motherhood*

“In this volume, Marty Machowski has provided a precious gift to Christian families. In the pages of this book parents will find an accessible road map for sharing the riches of the wisdom of the book of Proverbs with their children. The author assists parents with this task by providing illustrative activities and songs, facilitating prayer, and by providing relevant questions aimed at unfolding the wisdom of God’s Word.”

—**Anthony T. Selvaggio**, Preacher; lecturer; author of *The Proverbs Driven Life*

“*Wise Up* will help your children see that a life of wisdom is honest, hard-working, forgiving, generous, and faithful. But best of all, Marty Machowski shows us that this God-fearing life will only be ours when our hearts are made new by Jesus, who is himself God’s wisdom for us—our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.”

—**Jared Kennedy**, Pastor of Families, Sojourn Community Church—Midtown Congregation, Louisville, KY

“Wise parents want to raise wise children. But life conspires to make us live less wisely than we’d like, or they need. *Wise Up* helps parents to live wisely and instill that wisdom in their children. By means of fun projects, daily Scriptures, insightful

explanations, helpful discussion questions, and even memorable songs, *Wise Up* makes family devotions doable and enjoyable for everyone.”

—**John Kitchen**, Senior Pastor, Stow Alliance Fellowship, Stow, Ohio; author of *Proverbs: A Mentor Commentary*

“I don’t think I’ve met a parent who is satisfied with their experience of family devotions. And this is why I am grateful for *Wise Up*. Marty provides parents with twelve weeks of insightful and relevant family devotions from Proverbs. I heartily recommend this book to parents who want to create meaningful and memorable family devotions. Parents, wise up and buy this book!”

—**C. J. Mahaney**, Senior Pastor, Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville

“Marty Machowski has delivered yet another faithful, clear, and accessible book for parents and families. *Wise Up* is a compelling resource that winsomely communicates the wisdom of Proverbs to a modern generation, while also showing how Proverbs fits within the biblical storyline that culminates in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This book is a helpful tool for any parent who treasures the spiritual lives of their children and wants to nourish them in the faith once for all delivered to the saints.”

—**R. Albert Mohler, Jr.**, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

“I am pleased to recommend another of Marty Machowski’s wonderful family worship resources. *Wise Up* is a twelve-week study in the Proverbs. Each family devotional can be done in about ten minutes and includes Scripture reading, brief comments followed by provocative questions and a suggestion for prayer time. This book is engaging, interesting, full of good content, and above all doable—a valuable resource. Get it and use it for the good of your kids and generations yet unborn!”

—**Dr. Tedd Tripp**, Author, conference speaker

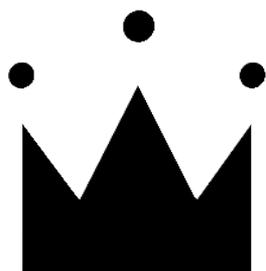
“Let’s face it: it’s relatively easy for us parents to go around spouting wisdom to our children, including wisdom from the Bible. The real trick is to learn wisdom without losing sight of the Savior who is wisdom. *Wise Up* does this, using the same brief format parents and kids have found so helpful in Marty’s past books.”

—**Jack Klumpenower**, Author of *Show Them Jesus* and *The Gospel-Centered Parent*



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*I dedicate this book to the many parents who
desire to disciple their children and who do not
give up in spite of the many temptations that seek
to lure us away from this most important task.*

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This devotional is designed to help your family explore the wisdom of Proverbs together. Wisdom is a great thing to seek. Wise people know what to do and say at just the right time. Wise people know when to speak and when to be silent. They know how important it is to be honest and kind; they know how important it is to be a faithful friend. Most important, they know that wisdom starts with trusting God.

Many have studied Proverbs because they wanted to become wise like Solomon, but the path of wisdom is found when we realize that the wisest people in the world—Solomon included—only become wise when they turn to Jesus to save them from their sins. Proverbs can give us good directions for wise living, but it can't give us the power to follow those directions.

Jesus succeeds where we cannot. Though a King in heaven, he humbled himself to become a servant. Jesus completed the mission given to him by his Father by going all the way to death on the cross to take the punishment we deserve for our sin. Seeking after wisdom is a worthy goal, but it is only when we see that Wisdom is Jesus himself that we truly become wise. Studying Proverbs through the lens of the gospel indeed demonstrates that “something greater than Solomon is here” (Matthew 12:42).

Each week, *Wise Up* explores one of twelve themes from Proverbs to see which practical wisdom we can learn and how it connects to the good news of Jesus's life, death, resurrection, and coming return. Scripture reading, discussion questions, and “wisdom activities” make these studies memorable for everyone in your family.

To help you and your children remember and reflect on these truths, consider learning the songs from the Sovereign Grace Music

album *Walking with the Wise* as you go through this devotional (http://www.sovereigngracemusic.org/Albums/Walking_with_the_Wise).

Enjoy all of the practical direction in Proverbs, but remember, don't try this without turning to Jesus for forgiveness, help, and direction. Jesus lives in the hearts of his people, empowering them to become like him, the wisest King of all.



The Real Wise Man

The One We Must
Learn to Trust



Day 1

Dig into the Word

Read Proverbs 1:1–7:

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth—Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

A proverb in the Bible is a wise saying. The Proverbs teach how to honor God in the way that we live. The sayings in Proverbs were compiled by King Solomon and other wise men. Some proverbs are easy to understand. For example, “let wise people listen and add to what they have learned” (Proverbs 1:5 NIV), tells us to listen carefully to what teachers say so we can learn more. Other times proverbs are like riddles that are harder to figure out. For example, “If you really want to gain knowledge, you must begin by having respect for the Lord.” When we read this we should ask questions:

What does it mean to respect the Lord? How does respecting God connect to gaining knowledge?

The book of Proverbs is filled with lessons, advice, and insight into how to make wise choices. The phrase, “let wise people listen” (Proverbs 1:5) tells us to listen, but we have to figure out how to be careful listeners. Does it mean we need to look at the person talking? Or ask questions about what we don’t understand? Or ask the speaker to repeat what was said? Or take notes?

The best part of all is that the book of Proverbs is God’s Word. While Solomon and other wise people are the authors, the Holy Spirit worked in them, inspiring them to write so that in the end, God is speaking to us, and it is his wisdom we are learning. God will use the book of Proverbs to teach, correct, and train us in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

Talk about It

- ▶ Who wrote the book of Proverbs? (*Solomon, among others*)
- ▶ How can God use Proverbs in our lives? (*God uses his Word to make us wise.*)
- ▶ What does it mean to have respect for God, and how do we learn to this? (*To respect God means to know that he is in charge of us—and the whole world—and to trust him with our whole lives. As we learn about God’s holiness and our own sinfulness we will grow in respect for God . . . and, consequently, in wisdom.*)

Pray about It

Ask the Lord to help you listen carefully to what he has to teach you through your study of Proverbs. Pray through Psalm 34:11 together: “Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.”

Wisdom at Work

Fit in this activity
anytime this
week.

Get the Big Picture

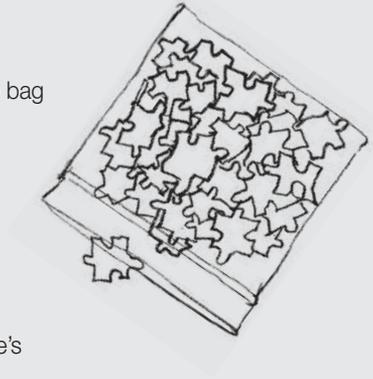
Supplies: 100-piece puzzle (use one your children have not seen before); plastic bag large enough to accommodate puzzle pieces

Ahead of time, transfer the puzzle pieces to the bag and hide the puzzle box.

Show the children the bag with the puzzle pieces and ask them to guess the finished picture. They may be able to guess parts of the puzzle from key pieces, but not all of the details. Now show them the box with the puzzle's picture and have them describe it again.

Explain that you are about to begin studying a book of the Bible that has many little pieces called proverbs (wise sayings). Each proverb teaches a bit of wisdom and is a piece of a big picture. The big picture is learning how to love and trust God with our whole heart. God is good and only asks us to do what is good. When we look at God's awesome power and then out of respect obey what he tells us to do, we are living in the fear of the Lord.

After devotions put the puzzle together.



Dig into the Word

Read Proverbs 3:5–6:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Life is full of choices. Some are good and some are bad. The trouble is that it is not always easy to tell the best choice. In Proverbs 3:5, Solomon gives us some good advice: Don't depend on yourself. Trust God and seek his will, and God will help you make a wise choice.

This doesn't mean life is easy if you trust God; sometimes God allows us to experience hard things to help us grow. And it doesn't mean we won't sometimes walk the wrong way and stumble and fall into sin. But it does mean we can trust God to be with us and to guide us every step of the way.

Think of a mountain climber connected to a rope and anchored to the rock as he climbs up a cliff. The rope is there with him the whole time to keep him from falling. At times the climber pulls himself up with the rope. When he does, he must completely trust the rope. That is the same way we are to trust God, not just a little bit, but completely, with our whole heart.

Proverbs does not tell us to trust in the Lord with all our *words*. It is easy to say, "I believe in God" or "I love Jesus," but not really mean it down deep inside. That is why we are told to trust the Lord with all our *heart*. Our heart is the deep place inside us that holds what we want, love, and believe. If we trust God with everything we want and love and believe, then we are trusting God with all of our heart. We'll learn more about the heart in next week's lesson.

Sing together
“Where It All Begins.”

Chorus

Here is where it all begins
Here’s the key to every door
It is when we know the fear of the Lord

Verse 1

When others try to draw you in
So you would join them in their sin
The fear of God will keep you safe
And give you strength to run away

Verse 2

The Lord will bless the ones who search
For wisdom in His holy Word
He’ll keep them from the devil’s snares
He’ll give them joy and hear their prayers!

Bridge

To fear the Lord, is to stand in awe
To love what’s right and hate what’s wrong
To fear the Lord, is to grow in love
For our great God who rules us all



WHERE
IT ALL
BEGINS

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Talk about It

- ▶ Why didn't Solomon say we should trust ourselves? Why did he say to trust the Lord? (*Parents, help your children think through the many reasons why we should trust God and not ourselves. Help them compare God's attributes with our own: he is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-wise, and we are none of those things.*)
- ▶ What does it mean to trust God with all our heart? (*Trusting God with our whole heart means we trust him completely. We don't just trust him when things are going well, or when we have to do something that's fun or easy. Trusting the Lord with our whole heart means trusting God all the time, in every circumstance.*)
- ▶ Parent, share a time from your life when you trusted God even though it was difficult. (*Think of a hard time where you were tempted to doubt, but saw God pull you through. Our children's faith is strengthened when we share our own experience of God's faithfulness.*)

Pray about It

Pray through Proverbs 3:5–6. Ask God to help you learn how to trust him with all your heart.



Day 3

Dig into the Word

Read Proverbs 18:10:

The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.

This verse compares God to a strong tower that we can run to for safety or shelter. Imagine living in a city that comes under enemy attack. Once the battle advances and the enemy draws near, most people run and hide for fear they will be captured. Now imagine

that you are one of those people. If you had a strong tower with thick walls and a heavy iron door, where would you go? You would run to the tower and bar the door behind you.

Solomon used the picture of a strong tower to teach us that when we are in trouble, we can run to God. We can do that by calling on him and asking him for help. Calling on God in times of trouble is like having a strong tower wherever we go. He is always faithful; he always keeps his promises. We live in him, and he lives in us. God will always help us in our time of trouble when we put our trust in him.

We can also run to God by going quickly to the Bible. The Bible is God's word to us. In the Bible God speaks to us. He reminds us of his love, his care, his mercy, and he tells us exactly what it means to trust him with our whole hearts. The people God gives us—our parents and teachers—can help us with their wisdom, but God is the real Wise Man! No one is wiser. God's perfect wisdom is recorded for us in the Bible. That is why we are studying the book of Proverbs. Solomon wasn't recording his own wisdom; he was writing down the wisdom he received from God.

Talk about It

- ▶ Why is a strong tower a good word picture for the name of the Lord? (*A strong tower can protect us from an enemy's attack. Its thick, stone walls and heavy iron door would keep us safe. God protects us from danger when we trust him.*)
- ▶ What are some things a strong tower could protect you from? (*A strong tower could protect you from wild animals, attacking armies, robbers, a windstorm, etc.*)
- ▶ What can God protect us from? (*God can protect us from evil and dangers of all kind—from things that might happen in this world, our own sin, and the devil. Through the death of Jesus on the cross, God delivers us from eternal death.*)

Pray about It

Ask God to show you that he is faithful in every circumstance, and that you can trust him as your strong tower every day in everything.



Day 4

Dig into the Word

Read Psalm 28:6–9:

Blessed be the LORD! For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy. The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. The LORD is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed. Oh, save your people and bless your heritage! Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

Solomon grew up listening to the psalms that his father, David, wrote. David taught his son to trust God. He taught that God would guard and watch over those who place their trust in God.

God also gave special instructions through Moses for the kings of Israel, to help them follow God. (Read those instructions in Deuteronomy 17:15–20.) God said a king should not own too many horses, accumulate too much gold, or have many wives because these things could turn his heart away from God. Each year the king was to write down a copy of this law and read it every day to help him remember these important instructions. God knew that it was easy to forget.

Sadly, even though Solomon was known for his wisdom and was the author of many of these proverbs, he did not follow God's command. He collected thousands of horses and tons of gold and took many wives. He surrounded himself with so many things that

he lost sight of God. In time he drifted from God and loved and trusted all his earthly possessions more than God.

Our great King Jesus didn't make those same mistakes (or any mistakes for that matter!). Jesus trusted the Lord with all his heart and obeyed the instructions for kings that God gave Moses. And unlike Solomon, Jesus followed his own teaching. For example, he told his followers: "Not everyone who says to me, 'LORD, LORD,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Jesus always did the will of his Father in heaven. How amazing is that?

Jesus didn't just say he would follow God his Father and then live life for himself. He obeyed perfectly, even when it came to dying on the cross. As Jesus prepared for his imminent capture and crucifixion, he prayed to God, saying: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will" (Matthew 26:39). Jesus he never loved anything more than God. The "cup" Jesus mentioned in his prayer was the cup of God's wrath or punishment for my sins and yours. So when Jesus agreed to drink this cup, he was agreeing to take our sins on himself—which is what his Father asked him to do.

Talk about It

- ▶ Why did God tell the kings not to collect too many things, like horses and gold? (*God knows that the things of the world can turn our hearts away from God.*)
- ▶ What about us—can the things of the world distract us from God too? (*Yes, it is easy to love the things of the world more than God. We often trust and love things more than God.*)
- ▶ How can we know if we love something more than God? Give examples. (*Often when we are impatient or jealous or angry about something it's a sign we love something more than God. An example might be when you hit or yelled at someone who accidentally stepped on and broke your favorite toy.*)

Pray about It

Ask God to show you what you trust more than him. Ask God to help you trust him more than anything else.



Day 5

Dig into the Word

Read John 11:20–27:

So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him . . . Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

Jesus came to earth to succeed where Solomon failed—living a perfect life and obeying God in everything. He also came to die, to take the punishment Solomon deserved for turning away from God. If we place our trust in Jesus and believe in him, we too will have our sins forgiven. So you see, in the Old Testament and New Testament the message is the same. We must place our trust in God.

In today’s Scripture passage, we see how Martha trusted the Lord Jesus with all her heart. Her brother Lazarus had died and Jesus hadn’t arrived in time to heal him. Even so, Martha knew Jesus was her strong tower. So when Jesus came into town, she ran to him.

Not long after, Jesus went to Lazarus's tomb and called him to come out, raising him from the dead.

Notice that Jesus wasn't just talking to Martha. The words of Jesus call out to us as well. He said, "Whoever believes in me." So you see, the promise of living in heaven forever is for us too, if we believe in Jesus and place our trust in him. In the end Jesus is our strong tower that we run to, to save us from our greatest enemies, sin and death. Now that Jesus has come, we read the book of Proverbs differently. When we read the words, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart," from Proverbs 3:5, we don't just think of God in general, we think of our Lord Jesus who God the Father sent to live a perfect life, then die on a cross to take our sins away.

Talk about It

- ▶ In today's passage what are the names Martha called Jesus? (*Martha called Jesus Lord, Christ, and the Son of God.*)
- ▶ What did Martha do and say that help us see she trusted in Jesus? (*As soon as Jesus came she ran to him. She said God would give Jesus whatever he asked, and that she believed that he was the Son of God.*)
- ▶ Do we need to trust the Lord? (*Yes we too need to trust the Lord. Parents, help your children see that they need to trust the Lord for everything. It is God who keeps their heart pumping, provides their ongoing health, food, and shelter. Most of all, we must trust the Lord, for the forgiveness we need because of our sin.*)
- ▶ Parents, recall a time when you experienced trusting the Lord in a deep way.

Pray about It

Ask the Lord to help you believe and trust him.