

WISER WITH JESUS

FIVE STUDIES IN PROVERBS

By Andy Buchan, June 2026

1. The Simple
2. The Fool
3. The Mocker
4. The Brokenhearted
5. The Sage

True wisdom is not just the accumulation of random facts but a way of being in the world that mirrors the character of Christ. This study explores five different **"heart postures"** and how Jesus invites us to consider his wisdom and its impact in our lives.

The book of Proverbs is a gracious gift from God the Father to his children, meant not to earn *sonship* but to live out the sonship *already given* in Christ. Jesus is the true embodiment of God's wisdom, and through him Proverbs becomes a powerful word from our Wonderful Counsellor, guiding us into practical, Spirit-led sanctification. This is wisdom "from above," so we are to seek it humbly and prayerfully, trusting God to give what we lack.

The best way to read Proverbs is slowly and reflectively, savouring each saying as it reveals God's character, our need, and the grace ultimately fulfilled in Jesus.¹

The concept for this series came from a series of talks in Katoomba and then a book by Zack Eswine, [Wiser with Jesus](#) (Christian Focus, 2025).



¹ See "Introduction to Proverbs", *ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible* (Crossway, 2019).

WEBSITE

considerjesus.au has more resources.

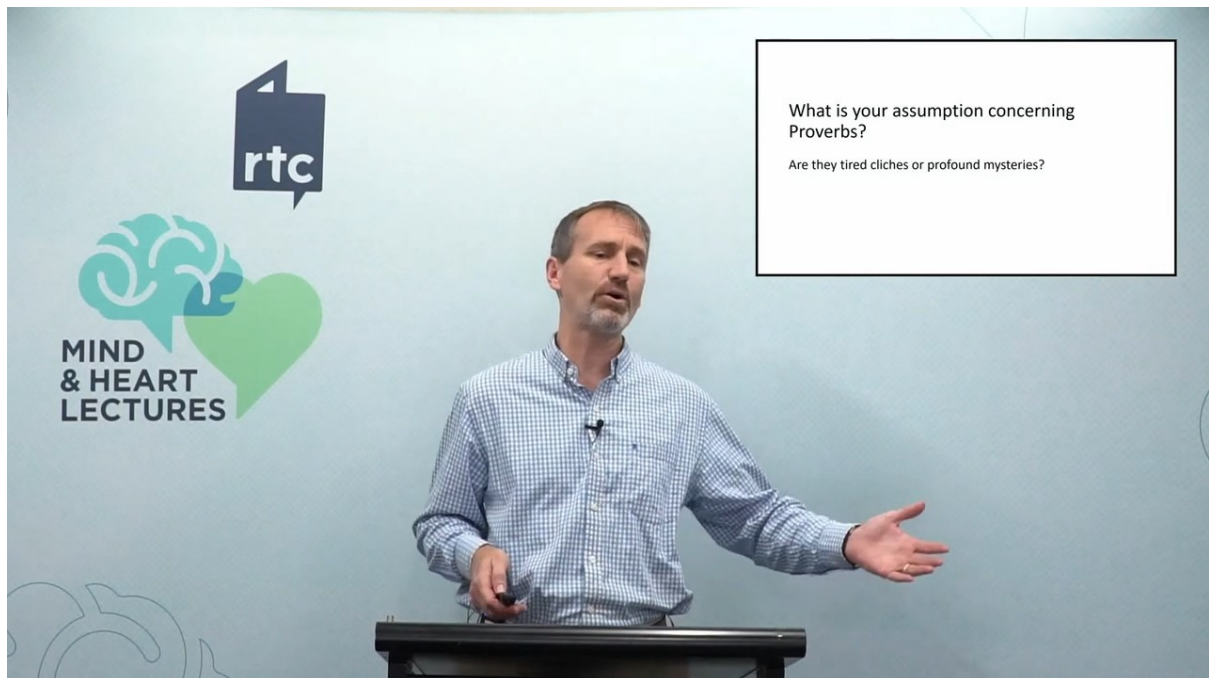
HELPFUL BOOKS

How to Read Proverbs, Tremper Longman III (IVP, 2002)

The Christ of Wisdom, O Palmer Robertson (P&R, 2017)

Wiser with Jesus, Zack Eswine (Christian Focus, 2025)

VIDEOS



[Stephen Lewis on the book of Proverbs](#) (RTC Resource, 2023).

HELP, I'M LEADING A BIBLE STUDY!

What a privilege that is! It can feel daunting, but remember: your role is to facilitate a conversation, not to be the expert. The questions provided will guide the discussion. You don't need to have all the answers – and if you do know a lot, resist the urge to answer your own questions.

Pray that God would help you be faithful in this task, and that his Spirit would help your group understand what he is saying to them through his word.

TOP TIPS FOR LEADING A GROUP:

- Begin with the opening discussion question, then read the first section of the passage and work through the questions in order.
- Encourage everyone to contribute – even brief thoughts help build confidence.
- Share the Bible reading around the group, and when asking questions, invite just one answer per person to give everyone space.
- Think of the study as a shared journey of discovery rather than a lesson you must deliver.
- Remember that God's word is living and active, powerful to change us from the inside out (Hebrews 4:12).
- Keep application in view – aim to help the group see how God's word speaks to real life.
- Leave time to pray together at the end.

WHICH BIBLE VERSION?

One Hope Community Church uses the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) along with the English Standard Version (ESV). You will find people using various other English translations too (i.e. NIV, NLT, and NKJV). Comparing them can prove to be very helpful. You could print copies of the passage to have everyone looking at the same version.

More expanded versions (like the *Amplified* or *The Message*) can prove *distracting* rather than helpful when reading with a group. Similarly, the notes in a study bible or a commentary can be helpful for individual study, but it is best practice to **avoid referring to them** in a group setting. Have a go at answering the questions together!

STUDY 1: THE SIMPLE

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OPENING QUESTION:

What is a proverb? Do you know one you can share with the group?

READ Proverbs 1:1-7

- Who was Solomon, and why do you think he compiled these sayings?
- Look at verse 7. What is the 'fear of the Lord'? (See also 9:10). How does this differ from being terrified of God?
- Why might we need proverbs for our lives?

READ THIS SELECTION: Proverbs 1:22, 9:6, 14:15, 14:18, 19:25, 22:3.

- What are the defining characteristics of the 'simple' (aka the 'inexperienced')?

THE HEART POSTURE: *The "simple" are often characterised by a lack of discernment or being easily led astray. They are often caught in a state of indecision or naive vulnerability, which can steal their time and mar their decision-making.*

- How is it that "the naïve" are at risk from those who would take advantage (see Romans 16:17-18)?
- In what areas of your life have you been "naive" to temptations around you?

THE WISDOM OF JESUS

READ Proverbs 4:1-9

- How does the gospel speak to the simple?
- How can seeking Jesus provide the discernment you need?
- How might you go about putting this into practice and actively seek wisdom in your life?

Pray for wisdom for each other.



STUDY 2: THE FOOL

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OPENING QUESTION:

How do you think our culture typically handles foolish behaviour?

READ: Proverbs 12:15, 14:1, 18:2

- Based on these verses, describe the characteristics of a fool.

The Heart Posture: *In a biblical sense, the fool is not someone with low intelligence, but someone who lives as if God does not exist (Psalm 14:1). This posture often leads to choices that thwart one's purpose and damage relationships.*

- How do Proverbs 12:15 and 18:2 illustrate this specific heart posture?
- Proverbs 14:1 notes that a foolish person can actively tear down their own home with their hands. In what ways do we see biblical folly ruin relationships and family dynamics?
- Certain temptations can mar our decision-making. Where do you find yourself slipping into independent planning rather than asking God for input?

THE WISDOM OF JESUS

READ: Matthew 7:24-27

- What is the difference between a wise builder and a foolish builder?
- How does Jesus rescue us from our self-destructive foolishness?
- How might you pray for a fool?

Pray Together



SESSION 3: THE SCOFFER

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OPENING QUESTION:

Cynicism and sarcasm are practically the default languages of social media and Aussie culture. Why do you think it is so easy, and even satisfying, to adopt a cynical attitude toward things?

READ Proverbs 1:22, 3:34, 21:24;

- What are the characteristics of a scoffer (or mocker)? How is it a more serious situation than for the simple and the fool?

The Posture: *The scoffer (or mocker) is characterised by pride and a refusal to be corrected. This cynical heart posture creates barriers in relationships and prevents spiritual growth.*

- Look at Proverbs 3:34. What is God's response to the proud mockers versus the humble? Why does a cynical heart pose such a massive barrier to our personal spiritual growth?
- When we feel the urge to be highly critical, cynical, or dismissive toward others, what internal temptation or insecurity is usually at play in our own hearts?

THE WISDOM OF JESUS

READ Luke 23:35-39

- As Jesus hung on the cross, the rulers, soldiers, and even a criminal scoffed at Him. What was Jesus' internal posture and physical response to that mockery?
- How does the radical humility of Jesus on the cross offer us a completely different path when we are tempted to build up defensive walls of cynicism?

Prayer: Ask that the Holy Spirit might search your heart for roots of bitterness or cynicism. Pray for a softened heart that mimics Jesus' grace, even when facing a critical world.



SESSION 4: THE BROKENHEARTED

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OPENING QUESTION: Sometimes we walk seasons of deep grief or disappointment. What are some unhelpful "quick fix" pieces of advice that well-meaning people give in those moments?

READ Proverbs 15:12; 17:22, Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 61:1

- What are the characteristics of the brokenhearted?

The Posture: *Unlike the previous postures, the brokenhearted is not a state of sin but a state of suffering. However, it is a critical "posture" where wisdom is desperately needed to keep despair from hindering your purpose and relationship to God.*

- What hope does God provide for the brokenhearted, when our hearts are completely crushed?
- Isaiah 61:1 outlines a specific mission for the coming Messiah. What does it say He intends to do with the brokenhearted? How does this redefine how God views our pain?

THE WISDOM OF JESUS

READ Matthew 11:28-30

- Jesus is described as the "Man of Sorrows" who is acquainted with grief. He does not offer a quick fix. What does he offer?
- How does Jesus help us navigate the seasons where our hearts are heavy without losing sight of our identity and purpose in Him?

Pray together



SESSION 5: THE SAGE

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OPENING QUESTION:

Who is the wisest person you know personally? What is it about the way they live, speak, or react to trouble that makes you view them as a sage?

READ Proverbs 4:1-27 & James 3:13-18

- Describe the characteristics of the wise.

The Posture: *The Sage is the person who has walked through the temptations of simplicity, folly, and cynicism and has emerged "Wiser with Jesus." This person uses their time and relationships to reflect the glory of God.*

- Look at James 3:13-18. Contrast the two types of wisdom James describes.
- What are the hallmarks of "earthly" wisdom versus the wisdom that comes down from heaven?
- Read Proverbs 4:23. What practical steps can we take to guard our affections and thoughts?

THE WISDOM OF JESUS

- Jesus is the incarnation of Wisdom (the Logos). How does he demonstrate that?
- Looking back at the topics we've covered, what is one specific area where you want to invite Jesus to make you "wiser"?

Pray for wisdom together, asking that you would grow to reflect the pure, peaceable, and gentle wisdom of Jesus to the world around us.

