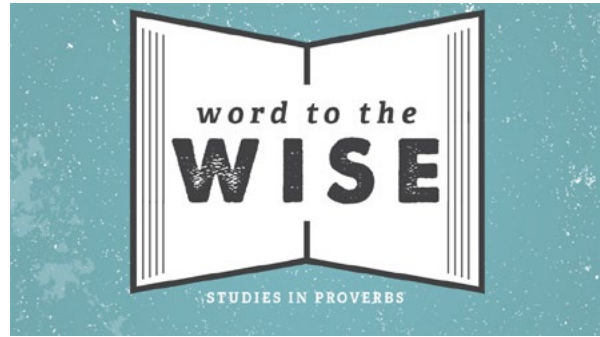


beyond^{the}Weekend

For the sermon on August 16-17, 2014
"Redemptive Pain"



Welcome to *Beyond the Weekend*! The experiences below are designed to connect with the weekend message. Take 20-30 minutes each day and enjoy your pursuit of God! *Beyond the Weekend* is also available via daily e-mails. To sign up, go to adabible.org/btw.

During July and August, we are traveling through the book of Proverbs. We are reading one chapter a day for two months, thus reading Proverbs twice this summer. Enjoy!

Day 1 Hebrews 12.7-11 | Discipline

We generally don't like, welcome, or desire discipline. In reality, however, without undergoing discipline, we will never *truly* flourish and appreciate our life as a gift from God. Discipline is good and necessary. Proverbs 12.1 says: "*Whoever* loves discipline, loves knowledge." Notice this isn't just aimed at children, but *anyone* who claims to love knowledge. A genuine love for knowledge, however, can only be satisfied through a disciplined lifestyle. If we want to grow and gain knowledge, we must learn to discipline ourselves and welcome God's correction.

Yes, God sometimes disciplines us. If we've placed our faith and trust in Jesus, we're his child. As his child, he'll lovingly discipline us when needed (Hebrews 12.11). This doesn't mean he senselessly causes us to suffer insurmountable obstacles. No, our good and gracious heavenly father uses discipline to form us into Christ-like people.

Discipline involves pain, but it's pain with a purpose: God's tool to form us and shape us. By welcoming his discipline into our lives, we grow in knowledge of him and begin to look more like Christ. Today, **in addition to reading Proverbs 18**, memorize Hebrews 12.11 and welcome God's efforts to transform you into a more Christ-like child of God.

Day 2 Proverbs 15.31-32 | Correction

Athletes understand discipline better than most. To excel, they need to make constant corrections to improve their performance. If they don't, their skill and effectiveness will suffer. The Christian life is no different (except we're disciples, not athletes)—we also need constant correction; not to win a competition, but to effectively and faithfully follow Christ.

Correction is essential because it breeds understanding, and understanding guides us as we live our lives (Proverbs 15.31-32). While correction sometimes requires just a minor adjustment, other times a total overhaul is necessary. This was the case with King David in 2 Samuel 11-12. David had committed adultery with a woman, got her pregnant, killed her husband to cover it up, and only realized his sin when he received God's correction. Only when David truly *understood* his behavior was he able to repent. Correction helped David see his sin and moved him toward God.

Understanding rarely comes easily. Only by humbly recognizing our need for understanding and correction will we grow as Christ-followers: *correction is essential to discipleship*. **Today, after you've read Proverbs 19**, reflect on the last time you received correction. Take some time to write down what you received and the changes you've made as a result. Then thank God for those he's using to bring correction in your life.

Day 3 Proverbs 16.18 | Humility or Pride

We all have skills and abilities that help us excel at one thing or another: sports, art, music, business, teaching, or a trade. But if we're not careful, we can begin to think we're so good we don't need correction. A prideful attitude in the face of correction is dangerous because it can hurt others. In the ancient world, humility was *essential* to the common good. Agrarian families could literally starve if children couldn't accept correction. That's why Proverbs 16.18 says: "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall."

Today, after you read Proverbs 20, reflect on how well you receive correction. Ask God to help you become more humble when you receive correction, not just for your good but also for the good of others.

Day 4 Proverbs 19.20 | Listening

When parents say, "Look at me when I'm talking to you," children get the point immediately: they know what comes next is very important and something they need to hear! It's true for us as well. If we don't position ourselves to hear what we're being told, we won't receive life-giving wisdom (Proverbs 19.20). To be Christ-followers requires we listen. If we don't, we're not just rejecting wisdom, but we may be rejecting Christ all together (Luke 6.46-49).

Today, gauge how well you listen. Pay attention to your posture and attitude when someone instructs you. Unfold your arms, make eye contact, quiet your heart, and listen. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you receive life-giving instruction today from wherever it may come. Also **continue your reading through Proverbs by reading chapter 21**.

Day 5 Deuteronomy 6.1-9 | Rules

Many of us still remember the rules we had growing up—some we understood and agreed with, others we didn't. But in most cases, these rules were meant to keep us safe and instill good life disciplines. Some rules carried greater consequences than others, but ideally they were meant to bless us.

Deuteronomy 6.1-9 emphasizes the generational impact rules can have. Rules helped Israel have a vibrant relationship with God and flourish as his children. But they must be continually communicated and lived if they're going to accomplish the goal. Today, write down the most important spiritual truths taught to you by a parent or a role model. Then write that person a note or e-mail thanking them for their investment in your life. Also, **continue your reading through Proverbs by reading chapter 22** and selecting one proverb that applies to you.

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