



# WEEK 1: A FOUNDATION FOR WISE LIVING

Wise living is to live righteously, in the sight of God, for God's glory and my good.

This Week's Primary Text: Proverbs 9:10

## Sermon Points:

### 1. To Live Righteously Is to Know God

Additional Texts: Isaiah 46:9-10, Romans 1:21,25, Romans 1:19, Psalm 141:1, 53:1

In order to know God, we need to spend time with him. If we don't, what we know about him, will not be what he has revealed to us in Scripture, but rather a mixture of what culture and experience has taught us. This wrong belief about God will directly impact and shape how we live our lives.

God has revealed himself to us in three ways:

1. Our inner sense of God – Not only is the external evidence sufficient, that there is a God, but there is also an echo in humanity about the reality of eternity, which is there because we were made and designed in God's image.

2. Through Scripture – God has chosen to reveal who he is, through the pages of scripture. In addition, Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit helps us to know that we are God's children. Scripture reveals to us in words, some of the truths we have experienced in our lives, as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit. Scripture tells us what is right or wrong, and gives our consciences the reason for the inner direction. Scripture tells us about God's character, and how he deals with people. And most importantly, scripture teaches us about the birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. Without Scripture, we would have very little information about God, who took on flesh, or about his teachings.

3. Through nature – The Bible says that even those that have not known of God have enough around them to prove to them that there is a creator. It is often when we are in the natural world, without any man-made influences, that we see the evidence of a brilliant creator, and it reminds us of God's brilliance.

### 2. To Live Righteously Is to Fear God

Additional Text: Romans 2:4

God is good. We are not. His goodness exposes our own darkness, and we then know how desperately we need his light. When we truly realise this, we live with a whole new level of reverence for him. Fearing God is an emotional, intellectual and spiritual response to how incredible God is: how holy, just, righteous, loving and absolutely perfect he is, in all of his ways. When we get deceived and forget this about God, we tend to accuse him of being unfair, or of not loving us enough, or we vent our anger towards him for things we imagine he has done. We put ourselves into the judge's seat, and we put God on trial.

These attitudes reveal our lack of understanding of how incredible, pure, magnificent and profound God's character truly is. But a healthy awareness of who God has revealed himself to be will cause nothing less than a humble submission and reverential awe for all he is and all he has done for us.





### 3. To Live Righteously We Must Draw Near to God

Additional Text: Genesis 3:18-19, Romans 5:6-11

We cannot live rightly before God, without God's intervention. Without God's help, we hide from him because of our sin, and we cannot be in a relationship with him. But because Jesus lived obediently on our behalf, and has gifted us his own righteousness, we are now able to live out his righteousness, instead of trying to live out and failing our own. This righteousness allows us to draw near to God, and to be in his presence. When we come before God, he sees the righteousness of Christ, and not our sin.

### 4. To Live Righteously We Must Trust and Obey God

Additional Text: Proverbs 3:5

In order to live righteously, we not only need to know God and continue to draw near to him, we also need to trust and obey him. He is God, and he is the only one who knows all things. He is the only one who has the authority and wisdom to decide what is right for our lives. Our response is to say, "yes Lord", and to carry out what he has said. Our trust and obedience are evidences of our knowing and fully believing in his good character. One can only consistently trust someone, if they are trustworthy.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it so important for us to continue reading scripture (even if we know a lot of scripture already), and not just rely on our inner awareness of God and nature to experience God?
2. In what way does our knowledge and application of scripture (or lack thereof) directly shape our lives? (*Personal Reflection: Think back to a time when you learned something new in scripture and it had a direct impact on a decision you needed to make. What changed as a result of encountering that scripture passage, and what impact do you think it had on your life?*)
3. What does it mean to fear the Lord, and why do you believe this is the beginning of wisdom?
4. Why do you think our posture towards God changes when we forget who he really is, and we stop fearing him so much? In what way have you experienced this shift in your own life?
5. Why do you think that when we fear God rightly, and put ourselves in a posture of humble submission, we are in a place to receive from God?
6. On what basis are we able to draw near to God and develop a strong and intimate relationship with him?
7. Why do you think trust and obedience are critical to living a righteous life?
8. Personal reflection: In what one area of your life are you struggling to live righteously and what do you think God is calling you to do about it, in response to this message? What posture needs to change and how do you think this will come about?

