

Proverbs 9

(New International Version)

Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars. 2She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has set her table. 3She has sent out her maid servants, and she calls out from the tops of the heights overlooking the city, 4Whoever is naive, let him come in here! She says to him who lacks understanding, 5Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. 6Forsake your ways, you who are naive, and you shall live; walk in the way of understanding! 7Whoever corrects a scoffer incurs abuse; and whoever rebukes a wicked man receives a wound. 8Do not rebuke a scoffer, if you do he will hate you. Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you. 9Give instruction to a wise man and he will become wiser; teach a righteous man and he will increase in knowledge. 10The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. 11By me your days will be multiplied and the years of your life will be increased. 12If you are wise, your wisdom will be of benefit to you; but if you scoff, you alone will suffer for it. 13The woman Folly is boisterous; she is naive and knows nothing. 14She sits at the door of her house, on a seat overlooking the heights of the city. 15She calls to those who pass by, to those who are going about their business, saying, 16Whoever is naive, let him come in here! And to him who lacks understanding, she says, 17Stolen waters are sweet; bread eaten in secret is delicious. 18But he does not realize that the dead are there; her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

THEME: Rather than continue to live life as a spiritual drifter, we are urged to submit ourselves to the discipline of divine wisdom.

PURPOSE: To exhort the hearers to become disciples of God's Divine Wisdom (disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ), and so avoid the tragic end that awaits the spiritual drifter.

OUTLINE:

I. Become a Disciple of Christ,

by Heeding His Divine Call (Proverbs 9:1-6)

II. Become a Disciple of Christ,

If You Presently are a Spiritual Drifter (Proverbs 9:7-12)

III. Become a Disciple of Christ,

Rather than Heeding the Call of Folly (Proverbs 9:13-18)

PROVERBS 9:1

The seven pillars are figurative; they do not represent seven principles of wisdom. In the Bible, the number seven represents completeness and perfection. This verse poetically states that wisdom lacks nothing—it is complete and perfect.

PROVERBS 9:1

Wisdom and Folly (foolishness) are portrayed in this chapter as rival young women, each preparing a feast and inviting people to it. But Wisdom is a responsible woman of character, while Folly is a prostitute serving stolen food. Wisdom appeals to the mind; Folly to the senses. It is easier to excite the senses, but the pleasures of Folly are temporary. By contrast, the satisfaction that Wisdom brings lasts forever.

PROVERBS 9:1-5

The banquet described in this chapter has some interesting parallels to the banquet Jesus described in one of his parables (Luke 14:15-24). Many may intend to go, but they never make it because they get sidetracked by other activities that seem more important at the time. Don't let anything become more important than your search for God's wisdom.

PROVERBS 9:7-10

Are you a mocker or a wise person? You can tell by the way you respond to criticism. Instead of replying with a quick put-down or clever retort when rebuked, listen to what is being said. Learn from your critics; this is the path to wisdom. Wisdom begins with knowing God. He gives insight into living because he created life. To know God you must not just know the facts about him; you must have a personal relationship with him. Do you really want to be wise? Get to know God better and better. (See James 1:5 and 2 Peter 1:2-4 for more on how to become wise.)

PROVERBS 9:14-17

There is something hypnotic and intoxicating about wickedness. One sin leads to another; sinful behavior seems more exciting than the Christian life. That is why many people put aside all thought of Wisdom's sumptuous banquet (9:1-5) in order to eat the stolen food of Folly. Don't be deceived—sin is dangerous.

Before reaching for forbidden fruit, take a long look at what happens to those who eat it.

Things God Hates

The book of Proverbs notes 14 types of people and actions that God hates. Let these be guidelines of what we are *not* to be and do!

Violent people	Proverbs 3:31
Haughtiness, lying, murdering, scheming, eagerness to do evil, a false witness, stirring up dissension	Proverbs 6:16-19
Those who are untruthful	Proverbs 12:22
The sacrifice of the wicked	Proverbs 15:8
The way of the wicked	Proverbs 15:9
The thoughts of the wicked	Proverbs 15:26
Those who are proud	Proverbs 16:5
Those who judge unjustly	Proverbs 17:15