



THE ONE YEAR®

**WISDOM FOR WOMEN**  
**DEVOTIONAL**

*365 Devotions through the Proverbs*

**DEBBI BRYSON**



## **PRAISE FOR THE ONE YEAR WISDOM FOR WOMEN DEVOTIONAL**

Solomon asked in Proverbs 31:10, “Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies.” Throughout the Proverbs Solomon defines the virtuous woman. Debbi Bryson has carefully searched through the Proverbs to ferret out those definitions. I believe that this research by Debbi, which has been put into an easy-to-read daily format, will be a spiritually enriching addition to any lady’s devotional reading. I highly recommend it to any lady who is seeking to become the woman that God would have her to be. I believe that it will provide valuable understanding as to a biblical definition of a virtuous woman.

### **PASTOR CHUCK SMITH**

Founding pastor of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa

We all have questions, and many times we look in all the wrong places for answers. Debbi beautifully and clearly shows that the Bible is sufficient to give us answers and that we need not look anywhere else. We get wisdom only when we get it from God!

### **GEORGIA PURDOM, PhD**

Research scientist and speaker

This devotional, *The One Year Wisdom for Women Devotional*, will become a tool to guide you in listening to the voice of God as He speaks to you through His word.

### **FERN NICHOLS**

Founder and president of Moms in Prayer International



**The One Year<sup>®</sup>**  
**Wisdom for Women**  
**Devotional**



THE ONE YEAR<sup>®</sup>

# WISDOM FOR WOMEN DEVOTIONAL

*365 Devotions through the Proverbs*

**DEBBI BRYSON**



*A nonfiction imprint of  
Tyndale House Publishers*

Visit Tyndale online at [tyndale.com](http://tyndale.com).

Visit Debbi Bryson's website at [biblebusstop.com](http://biblebusstop.com).

*Tyndale*, Tyndale's quill logo, *The One Year*, and *One Year* are registered trademarks of Tyndale House Ministries. The One Year logo is a trademark of Tyndale House Ministries.

*The One Year Wisdom for Women Devotional: 365 Devotions through the Proverbs*

Copyright © 2013 by Debbi Bryson. All rights reserved.

Cover illustration of floral pattern by Sarah Susan Richardson. Copyright © Tyndale House Ministries. All rights reserved.

Wrap photograph of dried flowers copyright © rh2010/Adobe Stock. All rights reserved.

Designed by Sarah Susan Richardson

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked AMP are taken from the Amplified® Bible (AMP), copyright © 2015 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. [www.lockman.org](http://www.lockman.org).

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from the *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

Scripture quotations marked MSG are taken from The Message, copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers.

Scripture quotations marked NASB are taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible,® copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. [www.lockman.org](http://www.lockman.org).

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, *New International Version*,® *NIV*.® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version,® copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture verses marked *Phillips* are taken from *The New Testament in Modern English* by J. B. Phillips, copyright © J. B. Phillips, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1972. All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-1-4964-5836-0 (HC)

Printed in China

28 27 26 25 24 23 22  
7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Introduction

Life is a journey. Along the road, do you ever ponder the big questions: *What is the meaning of life? Where did I come from? What happens when I die?* Where do you find the answers? Do you wonder: *Are there no maps, no GPS systems, no road signs at the crossroads? Are there no yellow warning lights or guardrails on sharp curves and narrow bridges?* If there is a God, would he be so cruel as to leave us to flounder and wander and lose our way? When we are overwhelmed, when troubles surround us, when we're sinking in the quicksand of life, is there no one who hears our desperate cries for help? Is there no one to send out a search-and-rescue party? These are questions that, if left unanswered, can and will leave us lonely and hopeless, fearful and confused.

The good news is, there is a God, and he has a message for you. His message is so big, clear, safe, and strong that it can radically and permanently change your entire life. God is not a distant God. He is near and kind and wise and good. Of course he cares about your personal journey, because he cares about you. No one has or ever will love you more.

We see reality from our narrow, limited position on planet Earth. We have tunnel vision. We can't see the forest for the trees. But God sits above the fray. He understands your past more than you do. He knew you before you were born (Psalm 139). He is so aware of every detail of your present, that the very hairs on your head are all numbered. And the mysterious, uncharted waters in your future are crystal clear and eternally important to the one who wants you to know him as "our Father who art in heaven."

What does all this have to do with wisdom? Absolutely everything. Wisdom is not a stale, rigid, boring set of rules engraved in stone long ago. Wisdom is alive and fresh. It's as dependable and unshakable as the sun that rises every day. The sun is far removed from the control and whims of man. You can't put it or the wind or a lightning bolt in a box. They are dynamic—meaning they are not static. They are full of power, energy, and activity. So is wisdom. What then is wisdom like? How can you recognize the real deal? James, the brother of Jesus, gives us this insight: "But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere" (James 3:17). Wow! This beautiful description piques our interest and stirs our hearts. How then can we acquire this amazing commodity? Surprisingly, wisdom is there for the asking; even a child can attain it.

*If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.*

JAMES 1:5

*[God's] word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.*

PSALM 119:105



The Bible—banned, burned, beloved. More widely read, more frequently attacked than any other book in history. Generations of intellectuals have attempted to discredit it; dictators of every age have outlawed it and executed those who read it. Yet soldiers carry it into battle believing it more powerful than their weapons. Fragments of it smuggled into solitary prison cells have transformed ruthless killers into gentle saints.

CHARLES COLSON

I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated to us through this book. But for it, we could not know right from wrong.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

## The One Year Bible

I, like many, have always had a respect for the Bible. But even after becoming a Christian, I found it difficult to be consistent in reading it through, cover to cover. Then one day (over twenty years ago) I discovered *The One Year Bible* (by Tyndale House Publishers). As I thumbed through the pages, I knew God had given me a simple, doable way to read every day. Each morning I open it to the page with that day's date. There I find a reading from the Old Testament, New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs. What a joy! For the first time in my life I experienced deep growth and a sense that I was daily hearing God's voice and guidance for myself. Honestly, the first few years I missed reading some days. But I learned not to try to catch up. I skipped what I missed and began again with the current day's reading. Through the years, thousands have joined what we now call "The Bible Bus." Friends, families, couples, and ministry teams find reading the same portion of Scripture cultivates fellowship and like-mindedness. Instead of dull duty, reading daily is fresh and personal as you "journey to the heart of God." If you would like to join us, in the back of the book I've included a page of helpful instructions on how to develop a quiet time.

## Wisdom for Women

*Wisdom for Women* was birthed on an ordinary day in Juneau, Alaska. That morning I went for a walk to the glacier with my friend Lisa. As we walked, she shared her sorrow that women are often confused, discouraged, and sidetracked. Hard situations or bad choices cause painful life consequences. Then she stopped and said, "Debbi, write something for us. We'll put it on the radio up here." Quite to my surprise, by the time we got back to the house, *Wisdom for Women* had a name and a plan. Before long it began airing on the radio. God truly does work in surprising ways. It then took several years to write and record 365 audio devotionals now heard on stations across the nation and as far away as Belize and Israel. "Let's sit down and talk" is the heart and tone. QR codes on the back cover and throughout this book allow you to scan and listen to the audio devotionals as you read each day.

Are you ready to travel through the profound and practical book of Proverbs? Will you look for God's sunbeam of wisdom to guide your path? Do you long to grow and become a Woman of Wisdom? A journey of a thousand miles begins with just one step.

Now as we begin, I wholeheartedly pray this prayer over your life: "This is Debbi Bryson, praying that the practical wisdom of God's Word will make you wise."



JANUARY

Scan this code for audio devotionals  
or visit [tyndal.es/wisdom](http://tyndal.es/wisdom).





## Fresh Start

*For attaining wisdom and discipline;  
for understanding words of insight  
for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life,  
doing what is right and just and fair;  
for giving prudence to the simple,  
knowledge and discretion to the young—  
let the wise listen and add to their learning,  
and let the discerning get guidance.*

PROVERBS 1:2-5 (NIV)

January 1: the very first day of a brand-new year. Picture with me this year laying out before you like a blanket of clean white snow. As yet, there are no mistakes, no new regrets, no fresh wounds to mar your path. This is the perfect time to let the past go and start afresh. As we begin in Proverbs 1, above, Solomon explains the purpose and life-changing effect the Proverbs can have.

But if you look around you, the pressures and influences to go in the wrong direction are strong—very strong. People are making foolish choices. Morality and integrity are ridiculed. God is mocked, the Bible neglected. Hosea said, “They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind” (Hosea 8:7, NIV).

Therefore, we must choose. W. C. Fields once said, “Remember, a dead fish can float downstream, but it takes a live fish to go against the flow.” So choose wisdom! God has not left us to chart our course alone. He’s given us his Word. Let me invite you to pick up a One Year Bible. It lays out a very doable reading schedule. It is simple and yet life changing. So today will you open your Bible to the first chapter of the book of Proverbs and begin this year as a journey to becoming a Woman of Wisdom?

### Make It Personal . . . Live It Out!

Will you take a moment right now to personally picture this new year as a field of fresh snow? Now picture a ray of light marking the path. God has a promise to help you start your year right. He says, “Ask me and I will tell you remarkable secrets you do not know about things to come” (Jeremiah 33:3). Will you pray right now? As you pray, be aware and excited that God hears and is waiting to help.



## Godly Reverence

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,  
but fools despise wisdom and discipline.*

PROVERBS 1:7 (NIV)

“The fear of the Lord.” On our journey to becoming women of wisdom, it is vital that we truly understand what it is to fear the Lord. First of all we must know what it isn’t. To fear the Lord is not the same as being afraid of him like he is mean or selfish or harsh or cruel. Nothing could be further from the truth.

To fear God is to know that he is righteous and he hates wickedness. God is holy. God hates sin because it enslaves us and destroys our lives. Sin separates us from his love. Jesus said, “God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:17, NKJV).

So what is it to have a proper fear of God? It is to have a deep reverence for him. It is to be in awe of him because he is awe-some. It is to understand that he is the God of the universe, and we are not. He is the Creator, the King Eternal, the Only Wise God. When we respect him for who he is and live under both his authority and his love, there is no sweeter, safer, more peaceful way to live. This is truly wisdom.

A holy fear of a holy God—it does our souls good to have such an awe-inspiring reverence. Tonight, look up at the stars and know they all can fit in the palm of his hand. As the song proclaims, “Our God is an awesome God; he reigns from heaven above with wisdom, power, and love. Our God is an awesome God” (song lyrics by Rich Mullins).

### Make It Personal . . . Live It Out!

There are two kinds of people in this world. There are Big God-ers and there are Little God-ers. David, Daniel, Moses, and Mary believed that God can move giants and mountains and men. Do you? Or do you live with a greater fear of men than you do of God almighty? Now the important question is, Will you choose to embrace him not just as *an* awesome God but as *your* awesome God?



## Peer Pressure

*My [child], if sinners entice you,  
Do not consent.*

*If they say, "Come with us," . . .*

*Keep your foot from their path.*

PROVERBS 1:10-11, 15 (NKJV)

This is a warning. Be on guard. Don't be influenced or pressured into doing something you know is wrong. Sin has a powerful lure all by itself, but when others try to pull us in, it can become even more powerful. Does this happen? All the time. Sometimes sin comes in the back door through friends—the wrong kind of friends.

I'm going to list some of the ways that we sometimes yield when we have friends who influence us to do things that aren't the best. Do you have a friend who shops till she drops? When you're together you, too, shop too much. You spend too much money, and you buy things you don't need.

Complaining. Do you have a friend you complain with every time you are together? Both of you feel free to complain about your husbands, relatives, friends, people at church.

Do you have friends who compromise? Do they entice you to compromise by recommending R movies or trashy books? Do they invite you to join them for a drink at the bar? Or—warning!—do you have anyone in your life who is flirting with you, stirring you up to unhealthy desires?

Dear sisters, two things: (1) Pay attention to the red flags of danger. Do not have a friend who entices you to sin. And (2) be careful about the type of friend you are. A godly friend is a good friend

### Make It Personal . . . Live It Out!

What's wrong with ungodly friends? Didn't Jesus intentionally spend time with sinners? Yes, he did. But his intentions were entirely different than just letting his hair down and fitting in. He brought light and truth into every atmosphere. He loved sinners and they knew it. He was grieved by the emptiness and pain he saw on their faces. Darkness did not drag him down; instead, he used light to lift them up.

### Let's Pray

Lord, seal my heart against compromise so I can be a vessel of your light in a lost and dying world.



## Wisdom Calls!

As we read the proverb for today, picture wisdom as a woman—a woman like a mother standing on firm, solid, safe ground. She is calling out to those she cares deeply about. She knows, as every loving, wise, godly mother knows, that if they do not choose the higher ground of wisdom, they will be swept away by foolish, dangerous choices. So listen and picture the voice of God’s wisdom calling out to you in today’s Wisdom for Women.

*Wisdom calls aloud outside;  
She raises her voice in the open squares. . . .  
She speaks her words:  
“How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?  
For scorners delight in their scorning,  
And fools hate knowledge.  
Turn at my rebuke;  
Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;  
I will make my words known to you.”*

PROVERBS 1:20-23 (NKJV)

Did you hear both the warning and the promise? Right now I feel an urgency. This year may be indeed the most complicated and challenging year we have ever faced. There are dangerous changes brewing in our world. Do not let circumstances, or others, or the ungodly world around you pressure you into making wrong choices. Do not let the lines between right and wrong become fuzzy to you just because they are blurry to others. Choose wisdom!

If you do, God himself promises that he will pour out his Spirit upon you and make his words known to you. Choose wisdom!

### Make It Personal . . . Live It Out!

What is the antidote for the toxic and demeaning role models that are broadcast to us as women everywhere we look? God’s Word! God’s Word teaches us that women have a place of honor. We can be amazing influences for good. When God’s Word is in you, you realize that the false images and values shown in the media are just cheap substitutes.

Look at the One Year Bible Reading list on this page. It gives you a simple, easy-to-follow guide. Try it. God’s Word is God’s love letter, God’s truth, and God’s light for your life. God’s wisdom is calling, Will you listen? Will you follow?

---

#### ONE YEAR BIBLE READING

Genesis 8:1-10:32; Matthew 4:12-25; Psalm 4:1-8; Proverbs 1:20-23



## A Sober Warning

*Since you rejected me [wisdom] when I called  
and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand,  
since you ignored all my advice  
and would not accept my rebuke,  
I in turn will laugh at your disaster;  
I will mock when calamity overtakes you—  
when calamity overtakes you like a storm,  
when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind,  
when distress and trouble overwhelm you.  
Then they will call to me but I will not answer;  
they will look for me but will not find me.*

PROVERBS 1:24-28 (NIV)

Today's proverb is very serious and, I hope, a sobering warning.

God's mercy, his love, his kindness to call us out of darkness is amazing. He will send conviction to our souls over and over with great compassion and patience, but if we repeatedly disobey, if we harden our hearts, he will refuse his grace. There will come a time when it is too late.

A few years ago I needed to catch a plane, but I was careless. I got a late start to the airport and hit traffic. It was my own fault. When I got to the gate, the door had closed. Too late. The plane took off without me. But I guarantee you the next time I was to fly, I got up early, and the plane arrived late. So if you are listening, if you have turned your back on wisdom in the past, it's time to learn from your mistakes. Don't repeat them. Don't be careless with your life and don't be careless with your soul.

### Make It Personal . . . Live It Out!

Some people don't like to hear or heed warnings. The captain of the Titanic was one of them. The morning before the disaster, the sky was blue and the sea calm. So he canceled the scheduled lifeboat drill. No need; the Titanic was unsinkable. He received—and ignored—seven iceberg warnings, until it was too late.

If God has sent a flashing light of warning or conviction in your heart, listen. Life has icebergs ahead. Slow down, change course, and allow him to navigate you back to safety.



## Truth or Consequences

*Because they hated knowledge  
And did not choose the fear of the LORD,  
They would have none of my [wisdom's] counsel  
And despised my every rebuke.  
Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way,  
And be filled to the full with their own fancies.  
For the turning away of the simple will slay them,  
And the complacency of fools will destroy them.*

PROVERBS 1:29-32 (NKJV)

Today's Wisdom for Women talks about consequences. It's been said that sometimes the best way to convince someone he's wrong is to let him have his way. Or, as James MacDonald puts it, "Choose to sin, choose to suffer."

Galatians 6:7-8 explains it very clearly. Listen to what it says: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life" (NKJV).

Okay then, let's look at your life like a garden. Every farmer knows that at every stage he makes choices. In the spring he can choose to plant tomatoes. He knows that if he plants tomatoes he won't get potatoes. He can choose to pull the weeds when they are small. He can choose to water, and fertilize, and kill every pest that threatens his crop. But he also knows that his choices add up, and one day he will have tomatoes to eat and plenty to share with others.

All this to say: don't reject the Lord's wisdom in your life. That's foolish. Call out to the Lord for the wisdom you need today in all of your choices. They will bear fruit as a blessing today and a blessing tomorrow.

### Make It Personal . . . Live It Out!

Although this proverb applies to all of us, this is an important message that moms especially need to hear. Those little toddlers to teenagers under your care today will be the decision makers and parents of the next generation. Like a good gardener, will you be diligent to plant the good seeds of integrity, purity, humility, kindness, thankfulness, and godliness in your children's hearts and minds? Plant the seeds and pull the weeds!





## Insight and Understanding

*My [child], if you accept my words  
and store up my commands within you,  
turning your ear to wisdom  
and applying your heart to understanding—  
indeed, if you call out for insight  
and cry aloud for understanding,  
and if you look for it as for silver  
and search for it as for hidden treasure,  
then you will understand the fear of the LORD  
and find the knowledge of God.*

PROVERBS 2:1-5 (NIV)

As we begin, let me ask you a personal question. Please be honest in your answer. How important is the Bible to you—really? If you say it is important and yet you live day to day like it is less important than your hobbies or your favorite TV show, you're kidding yourself. Worse yet, you are missing out on the most wonderful, interesting, and life-changing experience there is: digging into the treasure chest of the living Word of God. So listen very carefully to today's Wisdom for Women.

If you would like to go deeper in learning and growing in God's Word, good. I love it when someone wants to know how. Let me invite you to my website. It's called BibleBusStop.com. There are lots of helps there to get you started.

And then when you do read, read prayerfully. As you read, read like you are searching to know God himself. Stop and pray often. Interact with God, using your reading time to discover more than just information. Truly, this is your Father God-child time. Picture it as a journey, a journey to the very heart of God.

### Make It Personal . . . Live It Out!

The gaining of insight is a key topic of our proverb today. So, what exactly is insight? Why do we need it? And how do we get it?

Insight is the ability to see and understand clearly the inner nature of things.

We need insight because things are not always as they appear. As moms, we need insight to read what is troubling our children. We need insight when something is amiss in our marriages. We need insight when a friendship is broken.

How do we get insight? Call out! We need to take God at his Word: "Ask and you will receive" (John 16:24, NIV).

---

### ONE YEAR BIBLE READING

Genesis 16:1-18:15; Matthew 6:1-24; Psalm 7:1-17; Proverbs 2:1-5