25 Characteristics of the Wise from the Proverbs

Daron Roberts

1. They don’t trust their heart…ever
   - Pr 3:5–7 Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.
   - Pr 28:26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.

2. They value Scripture above anything this world could offer
   - Pr 2:3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding;
   - Pr 3:21 My son, let them not vanish from your sight; Keep sound wisdom and discretion,
   - Pr 4:4-5 Then he taught me and said to me, “Let your heart hold fast my words; Keep my commandments and live; Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth
   - Pr 4:7 “The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding.
   - Pr 4:13 Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.
   - Pr 7:1-2 My son, keep my words And treasure my commandments within you. Keep my commandments and live, And my teaching as the apple of your eye.
   - Pr 7:4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,” And call understanding your intimate friend;
   - Pr 8:9-11 “They are all straightforward to him who understands, And right to those who find knowledge. “Take my instruction and not silver, And knowledge rather than choicest gold. For wisdom is better than jewels; And all desirable things cannot compare with her.”
   - Pr 10:23 Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool, And so is wisdom to a man of understanding.
   - Pr 16:16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver.
   - Pr 17:16 Why is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom, When he has no sense?
   - Pr 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding.

3. They don’t consult outside sources for wisdom
   - Pr 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.
   - Pr 20:24 Man’s steps are ordained by the LORD, How then can man understand his way?

4. They have a reservoir of scripture ready to be deployed
   - Pr 2:1,5 My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you…Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God.

5. They listen to biblical wisdom with the intent to obey
   - Pr 1:8 Hear, my son, your father’s instruction And do not forsake your mother’s teaching;
   - Pr 2:2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding;
   - Pr 4:1 Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, And give attention that you may gain understanding,
   - Pr 5:1 My son, give attention to my wisdom, Incline your ear to my understanding
   - Pr 8:33 “Heed instruction and be wise, And do not neglect it.
   - Pr 19:16 He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, But he who is careless of conduct will die.
   - Pr 22:17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your mind to my knowledge;
   - Pr 23:12 Apply your heart to discipline And your ears to words of knowledge.

6. They carefully consider all their decisions, even the most practical
   - Pr 2:1,9 My, son if you receive my words, and treasure my commandments within you… Then you will discern righteousness and justice And equity and every good course.
   - Pr 13:16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool displays folly.
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- Pr 14:8 The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way, But the foolishness of fools is deceit.
- Pr 14:15 The naive believes everything, But the sensible man considers his steps.
- Pr 19:2 Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge, And he who hurries his footsteps errs.
- Pr 23:1-3 When you sit down to dine with a ruler, Consider carefully what is before you; And put a knife to your throat. If you are a man of great appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, For it is deceptive food.

7. They have spiritual discernment about what is right and wrong
- Pr 28:5 Evil men do not understand justice, But those who seek the LORD understand all things.
- Pr 28:11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding sees through him.
- Pr 29:7 The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, The wicked does not understand.

8. They know the world is empty, and true fulfillment can only come through the living God
- Pr 3:13-15 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains understanding. For her profit is better than the profit of silver And her gain better than fine gold. She is more precious than jewels; And nothing you desire compares with her.

9. Their convictions are never static; they are always deepening and widening
- Pr 2:7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
- Pr 2:10 For wisdom will enter your heart And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
- Pr 8:12 “I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And I find knowledge and discretion.
- Pr 14:6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and finds none, But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.
- Pr 14:18 The naive inherit foolishness, But the sensible are crowned with knowledge.
- Pr 16:20 He who gives attention to the word will find good, And blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.
- Pr 17:24 Wisdom is in the presence of the one who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.
- Pr 24:3 By wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established;

10. They are careful to not unnecessarily offend with their words
- Pr 10:19 When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise.
- Pr 12:6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.
- Pr 12:23 A prudent man conceals knowledge, But the heart of fools proclaims folly.
- Pr 15:1-2 A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, But the mouth of fools spouts folly.
- Pr 15:7 The lips of the wise spread knowledge, But the hearts of fools are not so.
- Pr 17:28 Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is considered prudent.
- Pr 18:8 The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.
- Pr. 18:19 A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a citadel.
- Pr 29:20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

11. Their words spiritually refresh others
- Pr 10:13 On the lips of the discerning, wisdom is found, But a rod is for the back of him who lacks understanding.
- Pr 10:31 The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom, But the perverted tongue will be cut out.
25 Characteristics of the Wise from the Proverbs

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- **Pr 12:25** Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad.
- **Pr 15:23** A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word!
- **Pr 18:4** The words of a man’s mouth are deep waters; The fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.
- **Pr 20:15** There is gold, and an abundance of jewels; But the lips of knowledge are a more precious thing.
- **Pr 25:11** Like apples of gold in settings of silver Is a word spoken in right circumstances.
- **Pr 31:26** She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

12. They don’t self-promote
- **Pr. 15:33** ...And before honor comes humility.
- **Pr 27:2** Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

13. They are humble
- **Pr 11:2** When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom.

14. They fear the living God
- **Pr 1:7** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.
- **Pr 1:29** Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the Lord
- **Pr 2:5** Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God.
- **Pr 9:10** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- **Pr 13:13** The one who despises the word will be in debt to it, But the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded.
- **Pr 15:33** The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility.

15. They welcome consequences and discipline as distinguished guests
- **Pr 1:23** “Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.
- **Pr 5:12** And you say, “How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned reproof!
- **Pr 5:23** He will die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.
- **Pr 3:11** My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord Or loathe His reproof,
- **Pr 6:23** For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life
- **Pr 7:22** Suddenly he follows her As an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as one in fetters to the discipline of a fool,
- **Pr 12:1** Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, But he who hates reproof is stupid.
- **Pr 13:1** A wise son accepts his father’s discipline, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.
- **Pr 13:18** Poverty and shame will come to him who neglects discipline, But he who regards reproof will be honored.
- **Pr 15:5** A fool rejects his father’s discipline, But he who regards reproof is sensible.
- **Pr 15:32** He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.
- **Pr 16:22** Understanding is a fountain of life to one who has it, But the discipline of fools is folly.
- **Pr 17:10** A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding Than a hundred blows into a fool.
- **Pr 19:20** Listen to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days.
- **Pr 19:25** Strike a scoffer and the naive may become shrewd, But reprove one who has understanding and he will gain knowledge.
- **Pr 19:27** Cease listening, my son, to discipline, And you will stray from the words of knowledge.
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- **Pr 21:11** When the scoffer is punished, the naive becomes wise; But when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.
- **Pr 22:15** Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.
- **Pr 23:12** Apply your heart to discipline And your ears to words of knowledge.
- **Pr 23:13** Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.
- **Pr 24:32** When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction
- **Pr 28:13** He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.
- **Pr 29:15** The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

16. They are teachable and invite instruction into their life
- **Pr 1:5** A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,
- **Pr 5:2** That you may observe discretion And your lips may reserve knowledge.
- **Pr 9:8-9** Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you, Reprove a wise man and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, Teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning.
- **Pr 10:17** He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, But he who ignores reproof goes astray.
- **Pr 13:10** Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.
- **Pr 14:6** A scoffer seeks wisdom and finds none, But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.
- **Pr 14:33** Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding, but in the hearts of fools it is made known.
- **Pr 17:24** Wisdom is in the presence of the one who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.
- **Pr 18:15** The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.
- **Pr 29:19** A slave will not be instructed by words alone; For though he understands, there will be no response.

17. They move toward relationships that spiritually challenge them
- **Pr 18:1** He who separates himself seeks his own desire, He quarrels against all sound wisdom.
- **Pr 27:5–6** Better is open rebuke Than love that is concealed. 6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

18. They are never content with spiritually immaturity
- **Pr 1:22** “How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing And fools hate knowledge?

19. They are swift to forsake spiritually unhealthy relationships
- **Pr 1:10, 11,15** My son, if sinners entice you, Do not consent. 11If they say, “Come with us..... 15My son, do not walk in the way with them. Keep your feet from their path,
- **Pr 11:9** With his mouth the godless man destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
- **Pr 14:7** Leave the presence of a fool, Or you will not discern words of knowledge.
- **Pr 28:7** He who keeps the law is a discerning son, But he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father.
- **Pr 29:3** A man who loves wisdom makes his father glad, But he who keeps company with harlots wastes his wealth.
20. They occupy their thoughts with truth and not lies
   ➢ Pr 15:14 The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

21. They restrain their anger when it arises in their heart
   ➢ Pr 17:27 He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.
   ➢ Pr 29:11 A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back.

22. They weather the storms of life with a steady faith
   ➢ Pr 28:2 By the transgression of a land many are its princes, But by a man of understanding and knowledge, so it endures.

23. They can be identified by power and conviction
   ➢ Pr 24:5 A wise man is strong, And a man of knowledge increases power.

24. They want God’s approval over man’s
   ➢ Pr 29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.

25. They are those who have found wisdom’s salvation
   ➢ Pr 24:14 Know that wisdom is thus for your soul; If you find it, then there will be a future, And your hope will not be cut off.