

JUST FOR STUDENTS



WINTER 2022

Please do not send this newsletter back to Crossroads.

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

– Isaiah 9:6 (NIV)

Greetings from your Crossroads family!

As the winter days become shorter and colder, we pray that you are experiencing the warmth and comfort of God’s love. Some people enjoy the winter season, while others find it challenging and gloomy. In prison, winter can be especially difficult because the shorter days leave less time to be outside and active. Not being with family during the holidays can cause sadness or a heightened sense of loneliness. Yet many people find the winter months to be a time of spiritual renewal. Winter can supply more time for reading God’s Word and praying, and the Christmas season shines a light on the story of Jesus’ birth.

Have you ever wondered why we celebrate the birth of Jesus when it was His death and resurrection that made it possible for our relationship with God to be restored, our sins to be forgiven, and our eternity to be spent with God? Almost three hundred years after Jesus was on earth, around 312 AD, Constantine, the ruler of the Roman Empire, became a Christian. Constantine’s conversion to Christianity led him to issue an edict, or order, that ended the persecution of Christians in the area. It also paved the way for the Roman Empire to adopt Christianity as its official religion. Scholars estimate that up to twenty-five percent of the world’s population lived within the Roman Empire. As Christianity spread throughout the region, pagan temples were converted into church buildings. Holidays and festivals celebrating pagan gods were changed to honor Jesus. In fact, some people think that Christians shouldn’t celebrate Christmas because it was originally a pagan holiday called Saturnalia, dedicated to the Roman god Saturn. Christians in the early centuries of the Church no longer wanted a celebration to honor a pagan god that was not the true God, so they established what they called a “Christ Mass” to make sure the true God would be honored and worshiped. When Christians today celebrate Christmas, they are not taking part in a pagan celebration. They are celebrating the Son of God’s arrival on earth.

John, in his Gospel, wrote: *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).*

The birth of Jesus marked the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise God made to save His people from sin and its eternal consequences. Seven hundred years before Jesus’ birth, the prophet Isaiah looked forward to the promise of the birth of God’s Son (Isaiah 9:6). Christmas, for Christians, is the fulfillment of that promise. It is fitting that we remember and celebrate the fulfillment of God’s promise through the birth of His Son, Jesus.

Still Receiving Roadmaps?

In the summer edition of *Just for Students*, we told you that we would be discontinuing Roadmaps and shared why we made this decision. However, to be good stewards of the resources God has given us, we are using up what was already printed, so you might still receive Roadmaps with some lessons. If you receive a Roadmap in your lesson, you may complete it and send it in with a completed lesson.

Looking for a way to continue studying God's Word between lessons? We encourage you to read and pray along with the entire Crossroads family using the Scripture reading and prayer guide included in this newsletter.

Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant!

Throughout His ministry, Jesus told parables—short stories or illustrations that taught important truths about the Kingdom of God. Matthew 25:14–30 records the Parable of the Bags of Gold. This parable teaches us the included some Spread the Word enrollment cards with the fall edition of this newsletter for students whose facility allowed them. We encouraged you to share them with others at your facility who were interested in learning about God and studying His Word. In September and October, Crossroads received about 2,250 completed Spread the Word enrollment cards. By comparison, during the same two-month time frame last year, we received about 750 completed Spread the Word enrollment cards. Your efforts have resulted in a tripling of the number of people who have enrolled in Crossroads! 1,500 more people have become Crossroads students compared to September and October of last year as a direct result of your faithfulness to sharing the love of Jesus with those around you. Crossroads may not be the largest ministry to jails and prisons, but our students are doing amazing work for the Kingdom. Please join us in praying that each of these new students will grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Thank you all so much! “Well done, good and faithful servant!” (Matthew 25:23)

Scripture Reading and Prayer Guide: The Wisdom of Proverbs

As a new year approaches, many people make resolutions, or commitments, to change their behavior. Some people commit to losing weight, exercising more, or quitting a habit that isn't helpful or healthy. As 2023 draws near, we might want to look at improving our thinking and perspective about life. A changed mind comes before changed behavior.

The book of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings that help us look at our thinking and attitudes. If we can take some of these proverbs and apply them to our lives, the wisdom of God will work in us to help us have the mind of Christ. Over the next two months, pray especially for wisdom and understanding for yourself and the people you love.

Date	Passage	Reading Topic	Prayer Focus
Dec. 1	Proverbs 1:1–19	A call to gain wisdom	For God to give you His wisdom
Dec. 2	Proverbs 1:20–33	The world rejects God's wisdom	For people you know who need God
Dec. 3	Proverbs 2:1–8	We receive knowledge from God	To understand what God is doing in your life
Dec. 4	Proverbs 2:9–22	Wisdom keeps us from sin	For God to help you overcome temptation
Dec. 5	Proverbs 3:1–20	The value of wisdom	That you will value what God values
Dec. 6	Proverbs 3:21–35	Wisdom in action	That you will have confidence in the Lord
Dec. 7	Proverbs 4:1–9	A father's instruction	For those who have taught you about God
Dec. 8	Proverbs 4:10–27	Continue in the ways you were taught	For perseverance in your walk with Jesus
Dec. 9	Proverbs 5:1–14	Warning against adultery	To love God's laws
Dec. 10	Proverbs 5:15–23	Enjoy what the Lord has given you	For contentment

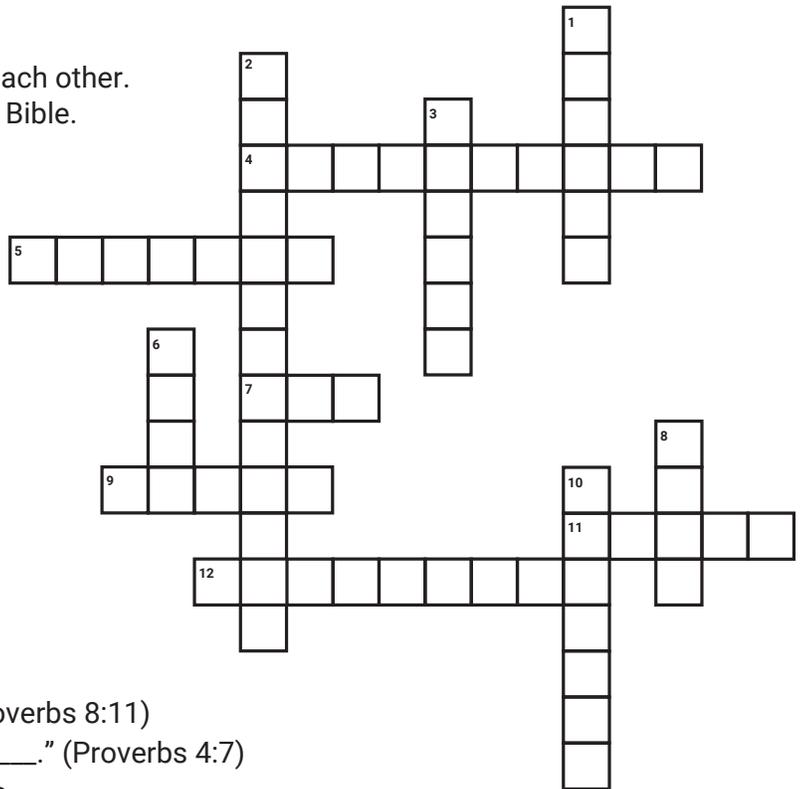
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Dec. 11	Proverbs 6:1–19	Warning against the way of the fool	For holiness; to be set apart for God
Dec. 12	Proverbs 6:20–35	Further warning against adultery	For sexual purity
Dec. 13	Proverbs 7:1–20	Warning against the adulteress	For those struggling with temptation
Dec. 14	Proverbs 7:21–27	Further warning against the adulteress	For those struggling with addiction
Dec. 15	Proverbs 8:1–21	The treasure of wisdom	That your love for Jesus will grow
Dec. 16	Proverbs 8:22–36	The power of wisdom	For wisdom to bring your worries to God
Dec. 17	Proverbs 9:1–12	An invitation to be wise	For those not seeking wisdom from God
Dec. 18	Proverbs 9:13–18	An invitation to be a fool	That sin will seem foolish to you
Dec. 19	Proverbs 10:1–16	“Love covers over all wrongs”	That your love for others will grow
Dec. 20	Proverbs 10:17–32	“Whoever spreads slander is a fool”	That your speech may be pure
Dec. 21	Proverbs 11:1–15	Righteous are rescued from trouble	For those being persecuted for their faith
Dec. 22	Proverbs 11:16–31	The wicked will not escape judgment	For those who have hard hearts
Dec. 23	Proverbs 12:1–14	The Lord corrects the wise	To be open to correction
Dec. 24	Proverbs 12:15–28	A wise person seeks advice	For God to place wise people in your life
Dec. 25	Proverbs 13:1–13	A wise person is humble	For a humble heart
Dec. 26	Proverbs 13:14–25	Walk with the wise	For leaders in the Church
Dec. 27	Proverbs 14:1–17	Fear the Lord	To view God rightly
Dec. 28	Proverbs 14:18–35	A wise person is kind	For opportunities to bless others
Dec. 29	Proverbs 15:1–16	“A gentle answer turns away wrath”	For a gentle spirit
Dec. 30	Proverbs 15:17–33	A wise person is loving	For those who feel unloved
Dec. 31	Proverbs 16:1–16	A wise person commits to God	To be open to God’s leading
Jan. 1	Proverbs 16:17–33	“Pride goes before destruction”	For those who seem lost or far from God
Jan. 2	Proverbs 17:1–14	A wise person is honest	To have integrity in all you do
Jan. 3	Proverbs 17:15–28	“A cheerful heart is good medicine”	For joy in your Christian walk
Jan. 4	Proverbs 18:1–12	A wise person seeks shelter in God	For greater trust in God
Jan. 5	Proverbs 18:13–24	A wise person speaks carefully	To honor God with your speech
Jan. 6	Proverbs 19:1–15	A wise person is patient	For increased patience
Jan. 7	Proverbs 19:16–29	A wise person is generous	For opportunities to be generous to others
Jan. 8	Proverbs 20:1–15	A wise person works hard	That you will do all your work for the Lord
Jan. 9	Proverbs 20:16–30	Wait for the Lord	For those suffering through war or conflict
Jan. 10	Proverbs 21:1–16	The wise hear the cry of the poor	For those suffering from hunger or starvation
Jan. 11	Proverbs 21:17–31	Nothing can succeed against the Lord	That the Gospel will reach more people
Jan. 12	Proverbs 22:1–16	A wise person avoids danger	For wisdom to stay away from danger
Jan. 13	Proverbs 22:17–29	Listen to the wisdom of the wise	For a soft heart that is quick to listen to God
Jan. 14	Proverbs 23:1–18	Be content with what you have	For contentment in your circumstances
Jan. 15	Proverbs 23:19–35	A wise person has self-control	For the fruits of the Spirit to be evident in your life
Jan. 16	Proverbs 24:1–16	A wise person has great power	For the power of the Holy Spirit in your life
Jan. 17	Proverbs 24:17–34	“Do not fret because of evildoers”	For greater understanding of God’s love for you
Jan. 18	Proverbs 25:1–14	Humility is the way of the wise	To have humility like Jesus
Jan. 19	Proverbs 25:15–28	Be kind to your enemies	That your enemies will know God’s love
Jan. 20	Proverbs 26:1–16	The wise are not quick to argue	For love and patience in your relationships
Jan. 21	Proverbs 26:17–28	Gossip feeds strife and quarrels	For your heart to be uninterested in gossip
Jan. 22	Proverbs 27:1–14	“Do not boast about tomorrow”	To rely on God instead of your own knowledge
Jan. 23	Proverbs 27:15–27	A wise person makes wise plans	For wisdom in making plans for the future
Jan. 24	Proverbs 28:1–14	“The righteous are as bold as a lion”	For boldness to speak the truth in love
Jan. 25	Proverbs 28:15–28	Trusting in yourself is foolish	For greater trust in God’s wisdom
Jan. 26	Proverbs 29:1–14	The wise care about justice	Pray for those enduring injustice
Jan. 27	Proverbs 29:15–27	“Pride brings a person low”	For humility for those in leadership
Jan. 28	Proverbs 30:1–14	A wise person treasures God’s Word	To love reading the Bible
Jan. 29	Proverbs 30:15–33	“Stirring up anger produces strife”	For peace where there is strife in your life
Jan. 30	Proverbs 31:1–9	The wise speak up for others	For those who feel defenseless
Jan. 31	Proverbs 31:10–31	The wise woman	For wisdom for the women in your life

Crossword Puzzle: The Wisdom of Proverbs

Use the clues below to fill in the words.

- Words can go across or down.
- Letters are shared where two words cross each other.
- Scripture quotations are taken from the NIV Bible.



DOWN

1. "Wisdom is more precious than _____." (Proverbs 8:11)
2. "Though it cost all you have, get _____." (Proverbs 4:7)
3. If you have good sense and judgment, you have _____.
6. "Rebuke the _____ and they will love you." (Proverbs 9:8)
8. "To fear the Lord is to hate _____." (Proverbs 8:13)
10. "He _____ the home of the righteous." (Proverbs 3:33)

ACROSS

4. "Do not despise the Lord's _____." (Proverbs 3:11)
5. A short saying that contains advice or wisdom.
7. We can learn wisdom from this insect. (Proverbs 6:6)
9. "The evil _____ of the wicked ensnare them." (Proverbs 5:22)
11. The Lord hates a _____ tongue. (Proverbs 6:17)
12. "From his mouth come _____ and understanding." (Proverbs 2:6)

From the Operations Department

- Please don't send *Just for Students* or the crossword puzzles back to Crossroads. They are yours to keep!
- If you move to a new facility or go home and want to continue your lessons, please let us know. To continue studying from home, please wait until you are living there to send us a note with the address.
- If you want a mentor to review a Roadmap you completed, make sure to send it with a completed lesson.
- We will send the next *Just for Students* newsletter to you in March.

