



Daily Verse and Comment

Proverbs 2:1-6

(1) My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, (2) turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, (3) and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, (4) and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, (5) then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. (6) For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

New International Version

God's Word is like His other creations. Like air, it too has multi-faceted uses. In fact, it seems as though its uses are inexhaustible. It does not matter whether one lives in the time of Abraham, [Moses](#), David, Ezra, Christ, or now. Its directly stated words or their spirit will apply. God's Word is so infinite and pure that it is always valid, always true, always applicable, and always an inexhaustible source of guidance. [Jesus](#) says that God's "word is truth" ([John 17:17](#)). Solomon adds, "Every word of [God](#) is pure" ([Proverbs 30:5](#)), and David writes, "The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" ([Psalm 12:6](#)).

[Psalm 119:17-18](#) states, "Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep your word. Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law." The author of this psalm has the right idea. Asking God for guidance into His Word should be our request each day. Understand, however, that it is one thing to deem the Bible a great book because of its reputation—it is another to study the Bible soberly, seeking for instruction in righteousness. This we *must* do.

Solomon instructs us in [Proverbs 2:1](#) on the necessary attitude toward it: "My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you. . . ." We should treat God's Word like treasure, as something precious. We should not treat it merely as something expensive but personally desired and used as our guide to life. Possessing it in this manner is within reach if we stretch ourselves or make sacrificial effort to have it. It is such a powerful tool that we should approach it as if it is the pearl of great price. Yet, this treasure is not something put in a safe-deposit vault and taken out only to look at on rare occasions. We are to seek it so that it can produce success and beneficial results in us. It is the most useful tool readily available to man to guide him in the most important area of life—his relationships with God and fellow man.

Verses 2-6 add a great deal of understanding about how vigorous and persistent our efforts should be toward possessing the treasure of God's Word. The phrase "incline your ear" (verse 2) pictures a person cocking his head and cupping his ear with his hand while straining to hear—understand—more distinctly. It depicts exerting physical effort, and the word "heart" shows we must apply strenuous mental effort as well. Admittedly, God's Word is not always easy to understand. It is a tool that requires varying levels of skill to use. At times, we must research patiently and diligently in many areas of Scripture to get as comprehensive a picture of its teaching on a given subject as possible.

In verse 3, "cry out" more literally means "invite to come." It is admonishing us to be open-minded as we research its pages. Our heart easily deceives us through lifelong prejudices and biases because we have passively accepted them as true. When God's Word challenges them, we are often moved to defend them. "Lift up your voice" adds greater intensity to "cry out," showing that we should not be passive regarding these biases. We need to search into them sincerely, and if we find them to be wrong, reject them.

By reminding us that the things we consider to be valuable usually have to be laboriously dug for and brought up from the depths, verse 4 urges us to pursue the riches of God's Word seriously.

Verse 5 then introduces an exceedingly interesting and essential principle we need to know for our growth. [Proverbs 1:7](#) informs us, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge," but [Proverbs 2:5](#) adds that the fear of the Lord is also a goal in our search for [wisdom](#). This is important to understanding "knowing God" because the thrust of the Bible reveals that we can only come to know Him by obeying Him, by striving to be morally perfect. The fear of the Lord is a major motivator in producing conformity to Him and His will. It helps us enormously to reverence Him deeply, and if we do, it will result in sincere obedience from the heart. In this context, the Bible essentially equates the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of God.

Verse 6 confirms that God is the source of all ethical authority as well as the blessings that flow from obedience to the knowledge of Him. The preceding verses urge obedience to Him as the principle of life because it results in knowing Him. Therefore, the fear of the Lord, the knowledge of God, understanding, and wisdom are all part of the same spiritual "salad." They are inextricably linked as necessary for those who want to please God and live the abundant life He intends for His children. Though we can properly define them as technically different from one another, in reality, they cannot be separated. The glue that holds them together is obedience to what we already know while we strive to improve all of them together. Verse 9 to the end of the chapter expounds the benefits of our search for this treasure.

In Psalm 119, the author shows how many varied and distinct elements are in fact linked in order to comprise a whole generally called "the law." The same principle holds true of those elements of [Proverbs 2:1-6](#). The psalmist asks God to deal bountifully with him ([Psalm 119:17-18](#)), so he can keep—obey—what he learned as he searched out each element. This shows that we need to consider the whole package in [Proverbs 2:1-6](#) because each of these elements draws on the others for support while simultaneously producing fruit toward the others.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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