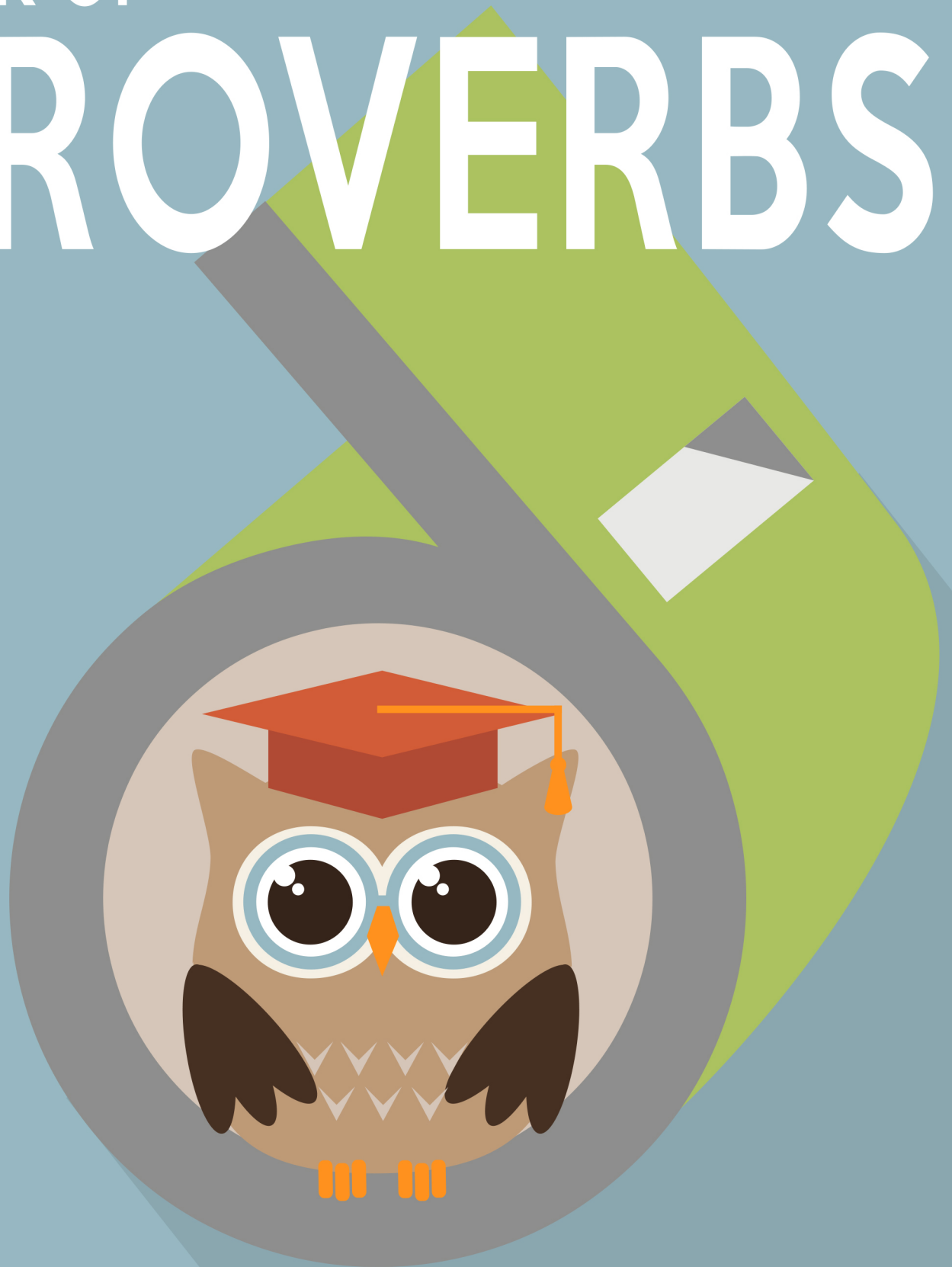


BOOK OF

# PROVERBS



WISDOM FOR EVERYDAY LIFE



---

## Devotion Guide for Coaches

### OVERVIEW

This season, players will explore the source and value of wisdom. In the book of Proverbs, King Solomon, wrote a collection of wise sayings giving advice to people (especially young people) on how to live according to godly wisdom. Our prayer is that players will learn and follow the advice of these proverbs, develop a closer walk with God, and a better understanding of how to do what is right and fair in everyday life.

### SAY • THINK • ACT • PRAY

Engage players with a relatable story or question. Encourage them to ponder the Bible verse\* and what it would look like on the field, at home, school, or anywhere in their daily life. Challenge players to take action demonstrating their faith in real ways. Use the prayer suggestion, your own prayer, or ask for a volunteer to pray to close the devotion.

*\*New International Reader's Version unless otherwise noted*

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

What Are Proverbs? • Proverbs 2:6  
What Would You Choose? • Proverbs 3:5-6  
Hold On Tight • Proverbs 4:13  
Teach Me • Proverbs 12:1  
Keep Your Cool • Proverbs 12:16  
True Friendship • Proverbs 17:17  
Tasty Tidbit • Proverbs 18:8  
Even the Score • Proverbs 20:22 • Salvation Prayer  
A Good Name • Proverbs 22:1  
Attitude of Gratitude • Proverbs 27:7

# TEAM SPORTS devotions

## What Are Proverbs?

Proverbs 2:6, James 1:5a



Have you heard these phrases before? What do they mean?

“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.” (Don’t let failing the first time stop you from further attempts.)

“Quitters never win; winners never quit” (If you quit you will never get what you want, but if you keep trying you will find a way to get what you want.)

“Practice makes perfect.”

(Doing something over and over again is the only way to learn to do it well.)

“Better safe than sorry.”

(It’s better to be careful than to be careless and have a disaster.)

These are examples of proverbs: short sayings that call us to do something wise. They are meant to help us. King Solomon, the wisest man to ever live, wrote thousands of wise sayings in the Bible. His wise sayings help us do the right thing.



*The Lord gives wisdom.  
Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.*

*Proverbs 2:6*



Wise people know the right thing to do and do it. **You know you should brush and floss your teeth every day, right? What would happen if you didn’t?** (your teeth would get cavities)  
Most people know they should brush and floss their teeth everyday, but wise people actually do it.



God wants us to make wise choices. He tells us how to do that in the Bible. If we want to learn how to be wise, we can ask God. James, the brother of Jesus, wrote, “*If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He will give it to you.*” **James 1:5a Who else can help you learn to be wise?** (parents, teachers, coaches, church leaders, grandparents)

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us and giving us wisdom.  
Help us be good listeners and make wise choices.  
We love you, Lord. Amen.*

# TEAM SPORTS devotions

## What Would You Choose?

Proverbs 3:5-6, 1 Kings 3:9



Solomon was still a young man when he became king of Israel. It was a very big job. God said Solomon could ask him for anything in the world. Solomon could have asked for lots of money or to live a very long life. Instead, Solomon asked God to make him able to tell right from wrong. *1 Kings 3:9* Solomon knew that as king, he would have to make a lot of tough decisions and he would need God's help because God always knows what is best. Solomon wrote:



*Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. In all your ways remember him. Then he will make your paths smooth and straight.*



Proverbs 3:5-6



What does it mean to “remember”? (able to think about something that you already know) This proverb says we should remember God in everything we are doing. Let's say your coach asked you to practice one skill at home during the week, but you feel like playing video games. **If you are remembering God, what would you do? If you are not remembering God, what might you do? Could not remembering God, get you in trouble?** When we remember God in all our ways, he will make our paths smooth and straight. When we remember God, we can trust him to lead us away from trouble.



How will you remember God in what you do at practice this week? At home or school?

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, you always know what is best.  
Help us remember you when we have choices to make.  
Help us make wise choices that keep us out of trouble. Amen.*

# TEAM SPORTS devotions

## Hold On Tight

Proverbs 4:13, 2 Peter 3:17



**Why is it important to wear protective gear in the game?**

**Why is it important to get off the field during a thunderstorm?**

**Why is it important to drink plenty of water when playing in hot weather?**

**Why is it important to look both ways before you cross the road?**

**Why is it important to wear a seatbelt in a car?**



*Hold on to my teaching. Don't let it go. Guard it well. It is your life.*

Proverbs 4:13



**Why is it important to hold on to wise teaching?** Your life could depend on it! Without wise teaching, we can be led to do wrong and sometimes dangerous things. Solomon says wise teaching is as important as your life. **What other wise teachings keep you safe?**



Peter was a friend of Jesus and a leader in the church. He wanted believers to know about Jesus and his wise teachings. But some people were leading Peter's friends to believe wrong and dangerous things. Peter wanted to protect his friends. He wrote, *"Dear friends, you have already been warned about this. So be on your guard. Then you won't be led astray...you will remain safe."* 2 Peter 3:17 Peter knew the better his friends understood what Jesus taught, the better they would be able to tell the difference between what is right and wrong and what is true and false.

**How can we find out more about Jesus and his wise teachings?** (read the Bible, go to church, talk to believers)

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, you love us and want to protect us by giving us wise teachings. Help us read the Bible to learn what is right and wrong. Help us know what is true and false. Amen.*


 TEAM SPORTS  
 devotions

## Teach Me

Proverbs 12:1, Colossians 1:10b



It was the start of the season. Cole looked around at his team. He had been playing the longest. He was sure he was the best player on the team. He was definitely better than Bobby, who was new to the game and didn't know as much as Cole. As the coach told the players what to practice, Bobby listened carefully while Cole imagined a shiny trophy with his name on it. Cole wasn't interested in learning anything new, but Bobby listened to everything the coach said and put it into practice. Bobby was eager to improve his game and he did. Cole played the same, not worse, but also not better. At the end of the season, the coach spoke to his team. He asked Bobby to stand up as he applauded him for his love of learning the sport and following every instruction he was given. Coach said Bobby had become a much stronger player. As Cole listened, he felt sad that he had not tried to learn new things like Bobby.



*Anyone who loves to be trained loves knowledge.  
Anyone who hates to be corrected is stupid.*

Proverbs 12:1



Wise people love learning new things. Learning helps them reach their goals. Foolish people hate being told what to do. They refuse to change and get stuck where they are. **Why is learning new things good for us? Why is it sometimes hard to accept correction?**



In the Bible, Paul wrote these words to his friends, "We want you to grow to know God better." *Colossians 1:10b* **Can we ever learn all there is to know, especially about God?** (No) There is always more to learn about God. He wants us to learn new things about him everyday so we can grow closer to him and be more like Jesus. **How can we learn more about God? How can learning more about God help us be closer friends with God?**

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, help us gladly accept correction and training so we can grow and improve. Most of all, help us listen and love learning more about you so we can be closer friends with you. Amen.*

# TEAM SPORTS devotions

## Keep Your Cool

Proverbs 12:16, Zephaniah 3:17



Remember “Bloat” the porcupine pufferfish in the movie, *Finding Nemo*? Bloat lived in the fish aquarium in Dr. Sherman’s office. Bloat was easily upset. When Bloat got upset, he would puff up like a ball. He would helplessly float around the tank whenever this happened. He had to wait for another fish to deflate him.



*Foolish people are easily upset.  
But wise people pay no attention to hurtful words.*

Proverbs 12:16



**Has someone ever upset you with their words?** It can be very hard to stay calm when someone says hurtful words to us. But that is what wise people do. Getting upset only makes things worse. People who are easily upset look foolish like Bloat.



Zephaniah was a friend of God in the Bible. He reminded God’s people that they were not alone. Zephaniah told them God was with them and would help calm them with his quiet love when they got upset. *Zephaniah 3:17* When you find yourself feeling angry and wanting to puff up, remember that God loves you. He is with you and able to help calm you down. **When someone is saying hurtful words to you, what could you quietly think or say to stay calm?**

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, you are always there for us when we are feeling happy and when we are feeling upset. When we want to get mad and puff up, help us be wise, stay calm, and use gentle words and actions. Amen.*


 TEAM SPORTS  
 devotions

## True Friendship

Proverbs 17:17, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7



**What words describe a friend?** (kind, helpful, loving, fun, sharing, nice, etc) Paul knew all about love. He loved Jesus and he knew Jesus loved him. Paul wrote letters to his friends who also loved Jesus. In the Bible, Paul told them that loving your friends means you always treat them well, you are never hurtful or selfish. *1 Corinthians 13:4-7*



***A friend loves at all times. He is there to help when trouble comes.***

Proverbs 17:17



Let's say your friend lost his favorite action figure in the yard somewhere. He asks you to help him look for it. But you just got a new video game you can't wait to play. **If a friend loves at all times and is there to help when trouble comes, what would a true friend do?**



True friends think of others first. True friends are patient, kind, and ready to help. **What does being a true friend look like on the team? What can you do this week to be a friend that loves at all times?**

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, you teach us how to love. Help us love our friends at all times, especially when they need our help in times of trouble. Amen.*



# TEAM SPORTS devotions

## Tasty Tidbit

Proverbs 18:8



**What is your favorite candy? Do you eat just one? How many do you eat at one time?**

Imagine a friend says to you, “Hey, come closer. Listen to this! You won’t believe what I just heard about our coach!” **Would that get your attention? Would you want to hear the unbelievable story about the coach?** Your friend can’t wait to whisper the story to you. He’s not sure if it’s true, but it’s too interesting to keep to himself.



*The words of anyone who talks about others are like tasty bites of food.  
They go deep down inside you.*

Proverbs 18:8



**Do you think your friend would tell his story in front of the coach? Why or why not?** The friend would probably not tell his story in front of the coach because whispering talk is often full of lies. At first, we might think that listening is fun and harmless, like eating a tasty piece of candy. But it makes God sad when we enjoy listening to false talk that hurts others. **How does false talk hurt others?**



**Who is being hurtful—the person talking about others or the person listening?** (Both. We should not enjoy talking about other people or listening to someone talk about other people.) **When someone tries to whisper stories about other people to you, how will you respond?**

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, help us not be fooled into talking about other people or listening to those who do. Give us wisdom and courage to turn away from it. Amen.*

# TEAM SPORTS devotions

## Even the Score

Proverbs 20:22, Genesis 37-50



Bryson ran as hard as he could on the field. He was almost about to score when his opponent tripped him. He fell down hard, but was able to walk off the field okay. As he rested on the bench, he glared across the field at the player who brought him down. Bryson imagined ways he would like to get that guy back.



*Don't say, 'I'll get even with you for the wrong you did to me!'  
Wait for the Lord, and he will save you.*

Proverbs 20:22



**What does it mean to get even?** Getting even means hurting someone back when they hurt us. We think we will feel better if we do things our way. But God has a different plan to make us feel better. In the Bible, Joseph annoyed his older brothers, so they made a plan to get rid of him. They sent Joseph to Egypt to be a slave and pretended he was dead. But God was with Joseph and made him successful in everything he did. *Genesis 39:2-3* Joseph was put in charge of Egypt. Some time later, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt looking for food. Joseph could have made a plan to get even. Instead, he made a plan to bring his family back together. He told his brothers, *"You planned to harm me. But God planned it for good."* *Genesis 50:20* **When we get hurt, does God want us to hurt back? (no) When someone hurts you, what makes you feel better?**



We can trust God to be with us like he was with Joseph. When we wait for the Lord, he will save us. Our enemy, Satan, planned to hurt us by separating us from God. But God planned it for good by sending his Son, Jesus to bring us back together. When we believe in Jesus and trust him with our life, we can be a child of God and be a part of his forever family. **Have you decided to follow Jesus?** If you want to follow Jesus for the first time or renew your love for Him, pray with me.

### PRAY

*Jesus, I have done things my way instead of God's way. I'm sorry and ask you to forgive me. I believe you died for me on the cross so that I can be a part of God's forever family. Please come into my life and make me like you. I trust you to be with me always. Amen.*

# TEAM SPORTS devotions

## A Good Name

Proverbs 22:1, Luke 19:1-9, 2:52



**What does it mean to have a reputation?** (what you are known for, good or bad) People get noticed for their behavior. Hearing someone's name makes us think of what they are known for. When behaviors are repeated, people can get a reputation.

John looks out for others. *When I hear his name, I think of him as "kind".*

Brian brings the best snacks to practice. *When I hear his name, I think of him as "generous".*

Austin complains a lot. *When I hear his name, I think of him as "grumpy".*

Chris breaks the rules. *When I hear his name, I think of him as "trouble".*



***You should want a good name more than you want great riches.  
To be highly respected is better than having silver or gold.***



Proverbs 22:1



God cares more about who we are than what we have. Our reputation is more important than anything we can buy with money. **Do you think a person can change their reputation?**

Zacchaeus did! In the Bible, Zacchaeus had a reputation for unfairly taking people's money.

When people heard his name, they thought of him as "greedy". He had a lot of silver and gold, but he did not have anyone's respect. After meeting with Jesus, Zacchaeus' heart was changed.

He wanted a good name more than he wanted to be rich. Zacchaeus made things right with the people he had cheated. He repaid everyone four times the amount he had taken. *Luke 19* **Now when people heard his name, what do you think they thought?**



The Bible tells us when Jesus was young, he grew wiser and stronger, more and more pleasing to God and to people. *Luke 2:52*

**What do you want to be known for?**

**What things can you do to have a good name and reputation?**

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, we want have a good name and reputation that is known for being like Jesus. Help us make wise choices that are pleasing to you and to people. Amen.*

TEAM SPORTS  
devotions

## Attitude of Gratitude

Proverbs 27:7



Cameron loved playing on the team at the beginning of the season. He was so excited when he first got his uniform and equipment. But that was several weeks ago and now he was getting kind of tired of it. Going to practices was starting to get old. He started complaining to his parents about getting up early for games. He complained about the coach and some of his teammates. He started dragging his feet when it was time to go to practice. His parents were beginning to lose patience.



*When you are full, you even hate honey.  
When you are hungry, even what is bitter tastes sweet.*

Proverbs 27:7



What is your **LEAST** favorite fruit? (grapefruit, for example) **If (grapefruit) was on a tray with other fruits you love, would you eat any (grapefruit)?** (probably not) **What if you hadn't eaten any food for 3 days and when you finally get to eat, the only food available is (grapefruit). Would you eat it?** (you would probably be hungry enough to eat it and it might even taste good to you) When your stomach is full, you are picky about what you want to eat. You might say, "I'm not hungry for that." But when you are starving, you are not picky. Even (grapefruit) sounds good to eat and you are just glad to have *any* food. Solomon is using food to teach us to appreciate what we have. **Could Solomon be telling us to appreciate things other than food?**



Sometimes we forget how fortunate we are. We begin to feel dissatisfied with things that once brought us joy. **Do you sometimes forget to be grateful for the opportunities you have? How can you be more thankful for the good things in your life?**

### PRAY

*Heavenly Father, thank you for giving us great opportunities. You take care of all our needs. Help us to be thankful for what we have. Amen.*