



## Small group study materials, July/August 2020

### Chapter & verse – Richard Lewney (page 16)

Read Proverbs 24:26 and Richard Lewney’s article.

1. The article begins by asking us to consider some sayings, and Richard shares one of his favourites. What are your favourite sayings? Do any come from the Bible?
2. Richard invites us to think of Proverbs 24:26 as advice to a leader. What difference does that make to your reading of the verse? As Richard asks: ‘What is precious to a leader, and perhaps so rare, about an honest answer?’
3. The article’s fourth paragraph focuses on Proverbs’ theme of ‘the importance of receiving wisdom, even when it is not always what we want to hear’. What was the last inconvenient truth you were told? How were you affected by this? What might you learn?
4. It’s easy to ignore fault-finding messages and press mute, argues Richard, in the sixth paragraph. Who in your life, or of today’s leaders, would you be tempted to mute? How might you gain by listening to them?
5. Richard reminds us that ‘not all our critics are truth tellers. Not all are a source of wisdom.’ What does it take to be God’s truth tellers today? What qualities must we encourage and what actions might we take?
6. The latter part of Richard’s article focuses on how to practise the wisdom of Proverbs. He uses questions as suggestions for how we might do so. Which of Richard’s suggestions might you, or your church community, want to commit to? How could you get others involved?

**For further reflection:** ‘If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.’ James 1:5

**Prayer:** Spirit of wisdom, help us to hear the wise words of those around us, even from those we are not inclined to listen to. Help us, we pray, to weigh our own words, to speak wisdom and to know when to hold our tongues. Make us ever ready to hear your guidance.

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