Trinity Reformed Church
of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Conservative, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
September 13, 2026

"Listen, O my people, to my instruction; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us." – Psalm 78:1-3

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"*" = *Please stand if you are able.*

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – James 3:13-18

Leader: *Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior*
People: **His deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.**
Leader: *But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart,*
People: **Do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.**
Leader: *This wisdom is not that which comes down from above,*
People: **But is earthly, natural, demonic.**
Leader: *For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist,*
People: **There is disorder and every evil thing.**
Leader: *But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy*
People: **And good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.**
Leader: *And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace*
People: **By those who make peace.**

Prayer of Invocation and Confession
Gospel Absolution Text – 1Corinthians 1:30

*Hymn #598 – "*Guide Me*"

Scripture Reading – Colossians 1:28-2:8

Ancient Creedal Proclamation – Apostles Creed (pg#845 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]
[Gifts labeled "Deacon's Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

*Doxology #731 (red hymnal)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

*Sung Psalm #127B – "*Unless the Lord is He Who Builds the House*"

Prayers of the Church & Lord's Prayer (sins) – *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

Reformation Creedal Reading – Westminster Confession, 1.7.

Leader: *All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves,*

People: **Nor alike clear unto all:** 2Pet 3:16

Leader: *Yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded,*

People: **And opened in some place of Scripture or other,**

Leader: *That not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means,*

People: **May attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.** Ps 119:105,130

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

*Sermon Text – Proverbs 1:2-6

*Gloria Patri #735 (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – "The Purpose of Proverbs"

(A Sermon Series on Proverbs 1-9)

Ministry of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation & Warning

TRC practices guarded open communion. All who profess faith in Christ, have been baptized, have a basic understanding of this sacrament, and are in good standing with a biblical local church are welcome to the Lord's Table. If you are uncertain whether you should partake, it is wise to abstain and speak with the pastor afterward.

Prayer

Words of Institution – Matthew 26:26-28 + Luke 22:19-20; 1Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:26

"While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.' . . . Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Hymn #674 – "*I Need Thee Every Hour*"

*Benediction

Everyone is welcome to Coffee Hour Fellowship downstairs after church today

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Announcements

- Thank you to all those who helped out at Bob Morse's funeral.
- Pastor Doug's **Tuesday & Wednesday Studies** will ***NOT*** start next week. They will return soon.
- On **September 20th** we will be taking a new photo of the entire church after the service, I would to get as many people in the picture as possible.
- Pastor Doug is trying to organize a **Zoom call** to discuss how **TRC can support home-schoolers**, if you are interested please see him.
- The next in-person **Elder & Deacon Meeting** will be at Pastor Doug's house on **October 3rd**.
- **October 10th**, Saturday, there will our annual **Oktoberfest** at the Aldrich's. (*Rain Date*: October 17th)
- The **4th Annual Christmas Party** will be on Friday, **December 4th**.
- TRC's **Annual Meeting** is after church, on Sunday, **December 13th**. The snow-day is December 20th.
- **Saturday Morning Prayer Group** at the Gabelmann's. (Please call Sheryl to confirm if the group is meeting that day, 860-309-7250.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

TRC's Webpage:	TrinityReformedCT.org
TRC's Facebook Page:	facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/
TRC's Youtube Channel:	youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT

INTERNET PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer requests for our prayer chain, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: **trcnwprayer@gmail.com**. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

LEADERSHIP

Elders:	Rev. Douglas Aldrich, pastor	860-379-1147	douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net
	Bob Ensminger	860-485-8738	robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com
	Rich Gabelmann	860-605-7852	rgabelmann0415@gmail.com
	Rev. Jonathan Haulenbeek	203-709-0784	jhaulenbeek@icloud.com
Deacons:	David Mattson (chair), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell, Mason Goodell, Dean Winters		
Sunday School:	Verna Aldrich	***Music Coordinator***:	Cindy Rines
Clerk:	Sheryl Gabelmann	***Treasurer***:	Cindy Rines

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut
Worship Starts At: 10:30 AM (9:30 AM in the summer)
Sunday Worship At: Winchester Grange (100 Newfield Rd; Winchester Center, CT 06098)
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065 – *Phone*: (860) 238-7399
Webpage: trinityreformedct.org – *Email*: trinityreformedct@gmail.com

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Sermon Notes

Proverbs 1:2-6
"The Purpose of Proverbs"
A Sermon Series on Proverbs 1-9
September 13, 2026

Introduction

1) Solomon's purpose in the Book of Proverbs is found in Proverbs 1:1-6.
2) Have you ever been frustrated by the Book of Proverbs?
    a) Of course it is part of the God-breathed, inerrant, written word of God.

"*Profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;*"
- 2Timothy 3:16b

b) And so many proverbs are famous, profound, and catchy (from the KJV):

i) Proverbs 16:18 – "*Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*"

ii) Proverbs 27:17 – "*Iron sharpeneth iron; So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*"

c) However, the section of the book that contains the list of proverbs (chapter 10 on) , can seem so jumbled to us moderns.

d) Some might say:

i) Why can't they be at least put together by category.
E.g. have all the "financial planning" proverbs together.

ii) Or why can't they be put together in a simple easy to follow plan?
Like a 10 Step Self-Help Course for: How to have better finances, a better marriage, improve your prayer life, lose weight, etc.

iii) That is a very modern, and very shallow way, of thinking.

3) Solomon has a much grander and more difficult goal.

a) He is not trying to teach success in a particular area of life.

b) He is teaching how one can become wise.

c) If you think of it, that is an incredibly hard thing to do.

d) But if, by the grace of God, one can become wise, that will impact everything else in that person's life. Prov 2:6-12; 3:13-18; 4:5-13 Eph 5:15-17; James 1:5; 3:13-18

4) Solomon is going to teach us how to "*know wisdom and instruction, to discern the sayings of understanding*," - Proverbs 1:2

5) Let us not skip quickly over this section, but carefully pondering it, allowing it to expose where our thinking is foolish, and what should we should ponder on.

To Know – Proverbs 1:2

1) First, let us ponder this word "***know***" (yā·ḏă‘), which is very important.

2) The Hebrew word for "to know" means more than merely acquiring facts.

a) It means to grasp, understand, and possess knowledge in a way that shapes judgment and conduct.

b) The information affects you, changes you, has consequences.

c) It is like the crude phrase "*he knows her in the biblical sense*."

i) That they had physical relations.

ii) That is what the biblical word for "know" is like.

iii) Genesis 4:1a – "*Now the man <u>had relations with</u>* (literally, "knew", yā·ḏă‘) *his wife Eve...*"

3) The modern dogmatic secular idea that "knowledge" is neutral, devoid of doctrine, dogma, wisdom, and morals, is foolishness.

a) The concept of "fact", i.e. knowledge devoid of interpretation, value, wisdom, truth, and meaning is a modern secular concept.

b) One of the greatest lies of Satan is that the religion of secularism is not a religion, but is simply neutral and science (i.e. fact base), which is just wicked and insane.

c) We think "teaching" should be "value neutral" which of course is just a cover to dogmatically impose a secular, ungodly, religion.

i) All teaching is moral; the question is whether it is godly or not.

- Godly teaching will produce wisdom.
- Godless teaching will produce death.

ii) It would be tempting to go into a diatribe against the dangers of more secular education, however, let us not get distracted.

4) This is the same word for "knowing" as found in Genesis 3:5,7,22; 4:1, about the fall of man.

a) After eating from the forbidden Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil Adam and Eve came to know (yā·ḏă‘) good and evil.

b) This was not merely acquiring neutral information about good and evil.

c) They came to know evil intimately, through committing it.

i) Not that they were not good before the fall; they were 100% good and innocent.

ii) But they didn't know the difference.

iii) It is like if you knew only light, you wouldn't know what darkness is or even what light is, until you experienced darkness.

iv) You can't describe light if you have no concept of darkness.

d) So, coming to know "good and evil" means one is now tainted with evil and no longer innocent.

5) Things like sin and wisdom are not just facts, they are conditions of the heart.

a) Sin is both an unlawful act and a spiritual condition (i.e. dead in sin). — Gen 6:5; Ps 51:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:23; 5:12; Eph 2:1-3

b) Likewise, wisdom is both doing what is correct and a spiritual condition (i.e. being wise). — Prov 2:6-12; 4:5-9; 9:10; Matt 7:24; Eph 5:15-17; James 3:13-17

6) The Bible is much more concerned first about the condition of one's heart, because from the state of one's heart will come evil and foolishness, or good and wise acts. — Gen 6:5; Prov 4:23; Jer 17:9; Matt 12:34-35; Mark 7:20-23; Luke 6:43-45

7) So, Solomon wants us "*to know wisdom and instruction, to discern the sayings of understanding,*" - Proverbs 1:2

Wisdom, Instruction & Discerning – Proverbs 1:2

1) **Wisdom** (*ḥāḵ·mā(h)*) is the capacity to understand and have skill in living according to the correct way, i.e. by God's ways.

a) Wisdom requires, what we moderns would call "information."

i) Stupidity is not a Christian virtue. — Prov 4:5-7; 8:5,33; 9:6,9-10; 14:8,15; Matt 10:16; Eph 5:15-17; James 1:5

ii) Nor is academic arrogance. — Prov 3:7; 16:18; Rom 12:3,16; 1Cor 8:1-3; 13:2; James 3:13-17

b) Biblically, knowledge and wisdom very much overlap.

i) **Knowledge** is rightly understanding what is true.

ii) **Wisdom** is to rightly use that knowledge to judge, choose, and live according to God's ways.

c) Knowledge knows what is true; understanding grasps its meaning; wisdom knows what to do with it.

2) **Instruction** (*mû·sār*) is to learn discipline, correction, and the willingness to take rebuke.

   a) We are called to be lovers of truth. — Zech 8:19; John 14:6; Eph 4:15,25; Phil 4:8; 2Thes 2:10; 3John 3-4

   b) We are to desire correction and training, but that is very hard for arrogant sinful man. — Prov 9:8-9; 12:1; 13:1; 15:31-33; Prov 19:20; Heb 12:5-11

   c) Question: Do you even want correction about your lusts?

      i) Are you willing to take advice from a serial skirt-chaser that lusting after women is wrong? Or would that give you an excuse to ignore the truth?

      ii) Solomon frequently warns us about the dangers of the woman Folly, yet he frequently chased after her. Are you going to listen to this book of Scripture or not? — Prov 5:1-14; 7:1-27; 9:13-18; 1Kgs 11:1-10; 1Cor 10:11-12; James 1:22-25

3) To get wisdom and instruction we are given the Book of Proverbs.

   a) This is a large collection of the sayings of wise men, Solomon and others. — Prov 1:1; 10:1; 22:17; Prov 24:23; 25:1; 30:1

   b) It is part of a genre called "Wisdom Literature" which was common in the ancient world.

      i) It usually doesn't focus on the theoretical or the abstract.

         • Such questions as "*are we actually just programs in an AI simulation*" or "*if Eve ate the fruit and Adam didn't what would have happened?*"

         • Are viewed as having little use.

      ii) Instead, it focuses on the practical and empirical (i.e. based on observation or experience).

      iii) It does ponder deep things, but to practical ends, such as asking:

         • "Why does evil happen to good people and how should we react?" (See the Book of Job.)

         • Or, "How do I obtain wisdom?" (See the Book of Proverbs.)

      iv) It frequently uses poetry to explore these questions – more about that later.

   c) In Proverbs, Solomon wants the reader to have wisdom and instruction, so as to **discern** these "***sayings of understandings.***"

4) The verb here for "discern" (*bîn*) carries the idea of distinguishing between things.

   a) This means to receive, perceive, and correctly interpret and implement wise sayings that express sound judgment and insight.

   b) In short: To understand what wise words really mean.

   c) Weighing out wise sayings, including proverbs, and knowing when to apply which one, at which time, at the correct portion, takes a lot of wisdom.

   d) And if you think always finding the middle ground, trying to keep everyone happy, is the wise course of action, then you are very foolish.

The Purpose of Wisdom – Proverbs 1:3

1) The purpose of wisdom is to give correct behavior characterized by: Righteousness, justice & equity.

2) **Righteousness** (*ṣĕ·ḏĕq*): Is simply what is right according to God's Law.
    a) The correct standard by which one should act.
    b) Think of the phrases "*that was a righteous act*" or "*that is a righteous man*."
    c) By the way, the fact that our culture has only the negative category of "*self-righteous*" usually falsely applied to the righteous, is telling.
3) **Justice** (*miš·pāṭ*): Is rightly applying God's law, the standard, correctly.
4) **Equity** (*mê·šā·rîm*): Is applying God's ways in a fair, upright, even-handed way.
5) For example: Your child steals an apple from your neighbor's tree, who is a mean old lady.
    a) **Righteousness** is to know that stealing is wrong – see the 8th Commandment. Ex 20:15; Lev 19:11; Deut 5:19; Prov 30:9; Eph 4:28; 1Pet 4:15
    b) **Justice** is that you go and make the child confess his crime and make restitution.
        i) That he is your child, or that your neighbor is a mean old lady, is irrelevant.
        ii) God demands justice and does not permit partiality. Lev 19:15; Deut 1:17; 16:19-20; Prov 24:23; Rom 2:11; James 2:1-9
    c) **Equity**, is showing charity, and not punishing your child too harshly, because he is young, and this is the first time he stole. And knowing this is an opportunity to train him in knowledge, wisdom, & righteousness, which is your job as a parent. Deut 6:6-7; 25:1-3; Prov 22:6; 23:13-14; Prov 29:15,17; Eph 6:4; Col 3:21
    d) By the way, don't let the secularists hijack good words like "justice" and "equity", which are noble biblical terms, just don't use them as the leftists do, because they frequently mean the exact opposite of what the word really means.
        i) It does mean you have to define your terms biblically.
        ii) Such as "justice" is not "social justice."
        iii) But this requires you to know the Scriptures.

From Boys to Men – Proverbs 1:4-5

1) Solomon wants "*to give prudence to the naive, to the youth knowledge and discretion*," - Proverbs 1:4
2) **Prudence** (*ʿār·mā(h)*) is discernment, wisdom, to show you understand something, and can manage one's affairs well.
    a) It also implies being shrewd, but in the moral sense. Not the sense of being crafty in deception. Prov 8:5,12; Ex 21:14; Josh 9:4
    b) Solomon wants to give prudence to the "naive", the simple, those who are easily deceived, showing a lack of wisdom and understanding. (Yet have some capacity to change this condition by the grace of God.)
3) In particular, Solomon wants to train the youth in wisdom.
    a) The word "youth" (*nă·ʿăr*) here implies a young man of any age from infancy to older adolescence, what we would call a teenager or young adult.
    b) Can older people, and women, be trained in wisdom? Sure.
    c) However, the Book of Proverbs puts a special focus on young men.[1]

[1] Prov 1:4,8-10; 2:1; 3:1,11,21; 4:1,10,20; 5:1,7,20; 6:1,3,20; 7:1,7; 19:27; 23:15,19,22,26; 24:13,21; 27:11.

i) They are future leaders of the church, family and society.

ii) A huge problem in this day and age, as it was in Solomon's day.

iii) Proverbs 7:7 – "*And I saw among the naive, and discerned among the youths* (literally "sons") *a young man lacking sense,*"

d) Modern secular world which has no place for men, which is insanity.

i) It is a curse to be governed by foolish weak men, women or children. Judg 4:4-9; Is 3:4-5,12; Eccl 10:16-17 Prov 28:15-16; 29:2,12; Is 3:4-5,12 Hos 13:11; Mic 3:1-3,9-11

ii) Isaiah 3:4-5,12 – "*And I will make mere lads their princes, and capricious children will rule over them, and the people will be oppressed, each one by another, and each one by his neighbor; The youth will storm against the elder and the inferior against the honorable . . . O My people! Their oppressors are children, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who guide you lead you astray and confuse the direction of your paths*."

iii) The fact that reading Isaiah 3 would get a pastor in trouble in all liberal churches, and most evangelical churches, shows how needed Proverbs is.

iv) More about that next week when we look at the key virtue of seeking after wisdom in Proverbs 1:7.

4) Solomon clearly wants to train young men to become adult men.

a) That is not just strength in body and action, but much more so about wisdom.

b) Proverbs 1:5 – "*A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,*"

5) Being able to listen is such a basic skill for knowledge and wisdom, but few do it well.

a) Proverbs 18:13 - "*He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.*"

b) James 1:19 - "*But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.*"

6) The wise man will always remain teachable, no matter his age.

a) The wise man listens and therefore grows in knowledge.

b) The understanding man seeks out and gains good guidance for making sound decisions.

c) Because wisdom does not make a person think he has nothing left to learn; it makes him more willing to listen and receive counsel.

d) That it is why it is critical that TRC has godly men leading her and to make sure the next generation is raised up.

Poetry – Proverbs 1:6

1) Let me challenge you to see if you are teachable, especially the young men.

a) *Question*: Do you like poetry?

b) If you say "no", do you realize that a large section of God's inerrant written word, especially the sections on wisdom, is written as poetry.

2) That is why Solomon writes, "*To understand a proverb and a figure, the words of the wise and their riddles.*" – Proverbs 1:6

3) Wisdom literature, like the Book of Proverbs, is written as poetry.

a) Along with such books as Psalms, Job, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, which make up the poetry section of the Old Testament.

b) Let alone the frequent use of poetry in biblical songs, prophecy, parables and apocalyptic literature.

4) The purpose of poetry is to paint a mental picture with words.
   a) Remember, for ancient literature, all genres were written for the ear, not the eye.
   b) Wisdom poetry shows an answer instead of describing it; it is much more of a journey than giving a direct simple answer.
      i) For example: Read the Book of Job to understand why evil happens to good people.
      ii) It is 42 chapters long for a reason.
      iii) Proverbs is 31 chapters long.

5) Poetry can be hard to get sometimes, especially ancient poetry; however, it can express truth in a much more powerful way than mere prose.
   a) To give a few examples, asking which is a better way to express a truth:
      i) Saying: "*Fathers should spend time with their children or they will regret it later*" or sing Henry Chapin's "*Cat's in the Cradle*".
      ii) Or in the Book of Proverbs instead of simply giving rhetorical philosophy Solomon has the virtuous woman Wisdom and the foolish woman Folly calling out to the hearer.
         • So instead of ending chapter 9 with simply saying following after an immoral woman, especially Folly herself, is bad, he ends with:
         • He speaks of Folly's house as: "*But he* (the foolish young man) *knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell."* – Prov 9:18
   b) Notice poetry is frequently less literally true (Wisdom and Folly are not real women), but conveys the meaning in a much more powerful way.

Conclusion

1) Proverbs is far more challenging than you think.
   a) It is not just about a few pithy sayings to be successful.
   b) It is about reworking how you think and more importantly how you act.
   c) And it is a life long journey.
2) But as we warned about from last week, if wisdom becomes an end unto itself, or merely about a successful life, then you are being foolish.
3) A challenge for you: As we go through these first 9 chapters ask yourself who Wisdom really is?
   a) Especially in Proverbs 8.
   b) In whom do you truly find: Wisdom, instruction, discernment, understanding, righteousness, justice, equity, prudence and knowledge?
   c) Note, I say "whom" not "what".
   d) Of course, in the end, it is not the poetic character Sophia (the Greek name for wisdom), but it is Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God.[2]

[2] Prov 1:20-33; 3:13-20; 8:1-36; 9:1-6; Matt 11:19; Luke 7:35; 11:49; John 1:1-3,14; 1Cor 1:24,30; 2:6-8; Col 1:15-17; 2:2-3.