



Exploring God's Love through the Bible:

The Practical Counsel of Proverbs

Sept 25, 2016

TEXT: PRO 1:1-7

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth—Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Pro 1:1-7)

THE PURPOSE OF PROVERBS

1. Proverbs helps us to know wisdom, and defeat **foolishness**; to know instruction and defeat **pride**, to understand what is righteous, true, and just and to shun **evil**, falsehood, bias.
2. Proverbs is designed to give understanding to the simple...to make us wise! It teaches us discretion.

Discretion: "Prudence, or knowledge and prudence; that discernment which enables a person to judge critically of what is correct and proper, united with caution; nice discernment and judgment, directed by circumspection, and primarily regarding ones own conduct." Webster 1828

3. Proverbs is designed to help us **fear** the LORD. That is the beginning of both knowledge and wisdom:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. (Pro 9:10)

EXHORTATION CONCERNING GOD'S LOVE

- The proposition for today is this: **that God loves you so much that He's given you practical, simple keys by which to live.**
- Undergirding the proposition is God's heart for a good, **holy** life for His people:

"And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?" (Deut 10:12-13)

And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. (Jer 32:38-39)

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. (Jam 1:25)

- Of course the whole of Scripture does this; we are to live by EVERY Word that comes from God's mouth (Matt 4:4). However, Proverbs is a collection of biblical wisdom about everyday life issues, that one can quickly go to for guidance. **I believe God, in love, gave us this.**

- MacDonald writes, “Proverbs is the world’s finest collection of sound, sanctified common sense, written so that young people might not have to make some of the dreary mistakes their elders have made.”
- **I submit that God loves His people and wants them to walk in His wisdom. When reading Proverbs, one can feel the heart of the a father to a child, wanting him to embrace the call of wisdom. It’s as if God is saying, “Oh, dear ones, please listen to me!”**

Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and forsake not your mother’s teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, “Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason; like Sheol let us swallow them alive, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we shall find all precious goods, we shall fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot among us; we will all have one purse”—my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths, for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood. For in vain is a net spread in the sight of any bird, but these men lie in wait for their own blood; they set an ambush for their own lives. (Pro 1:8-18)

Wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the markets she raises her voice; at the head of the noisy streets she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates she speaks: “How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge? If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you. Because I have called and you refused to listen, have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded, because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when terror strikes you, when terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you. Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. (Pro 1:20-28)

God’s wisdom is said to:

- Be a shield to those who walk in integrity (2:7)
- Be pleasant to the soul (2:10)
- Be a guard (2:11)
- Deliver from the way of evil (2:12)
- Deliver from the “forbidden woman” (ungodly relationships) (2:16)
- Cause one to inherit the land (2:20)

Therefore it says,

- Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones. (Pro 3:5-8)

THE PRACTICAL COUNSEL OF PROVERBS: FIVE EXAMPLES

MARRIAGE

Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love. Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress? (Pro 5:18-20)

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rotteness in his bones. (Pro 12:4)

The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down. (Pro 14:1)

It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife. (Pro 25:24)

PARENTING

The first seven chapters paint a **loving** picture of parental advice: “Hear, my son” (1:8), “My son, if you receive my words...” (2:1), “My son, do not forget my teaching..” (3:1), “Hear, O sons, a father’s instruction...” (4:1), “My son, be attentive to my wisdom...” (5:1), “My son, keep your father’s commandment...” (6:20), “My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you; keep my commandments and live, keep my teaching as the apple of your eye.” (7:1-2)

The rest of the admonitions involve **discipline** and training:

- **Prov 22:6** *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*
- **Prov 3:24** *Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.*
- *Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol. (Pro 23:13-14)*
- **Prov 29:15** *The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.*

MONEY

- *Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. (Pro 3:9-10)*
- **Pro 13:11** *Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.*
- **Pro 13:22** *A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children, but the sinner’s wealth is laid up for the righteous.*
- **Pro 21:20** *Precious treasure and oil are in a wise man’s dwelling, but a foolish man devours it.*
- **Pro 22:7** *The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.*

FRIENDS

- **Pro 10:23** *Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool, but wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding.*
- **Pro 11:14** *Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.*
- **Pro 13:20** *Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.*
- **Pro 16:22** *Good sense is a fountain of life to him who has it, but the instruction of fools is folly.*
- **Pro 16:28** *A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.*

WORK ETHIC/SELF-CONTROL

- *Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest. How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man. (Pro 6:6-11)*

- **Pro 14:17** *A man of quick temper acts foolishly, and a man of evil devices is hated.*
- **Pro 15:1** *A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*
- **Pro 16:32** *Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.*

PREACHING CHRIST IN THE TEXT

Pro 30:4 *Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name? Surely you know!*

Pro 30:5 *Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.*

Pro 30:6 *Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.*

Christ is Wisdom personified. He came down and ascended. He demonstrated control over the winds and the waters. His Name is Jesus! He declared the truth of God's Word, and in the last verses of the Bible, it is written:

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (Rev 22:18-20)

EXHORTATION FOR THE CHURCH

Jesus is the living Word! The wisdom in Proverbs is His wisdom. Sometimes, we make it harder than it needs to be. May you...

Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established. The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble. Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the LORD; be assured, he will not go unpunished. By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD one turns away from evil. (Pro 16:3-6)

In Jesus' Name, Amen.