

PROVERBS: Wisdom for Life

(Wisdom Personified: Proverbs 1:1-7)

A long climb up Mtn 13K peak, I wanted to reach destination, so I needed to know route. Don't deviate/danger. My desire was to get somewhere; but I didn't realize that I was going to become something in the process. Changed. Desp. & near death. I was about to become a statistic (went alone; not enough water) =short Journey; but changed me for a lifetime: "Our life itself is a journey; the end of it all is not just a destination but a *condition*: we are becoming the end of our journey too, wise or foolish -and every moment of our life is bringing us closer"

We live in an age where we have more access to knowledge/fact than in any time in history (instantaneous/immediate knowledge at the end of our fingertips): Do you think our lives our better for it? Socially? Relationally? Financially? Physically? Spiritually? =Resounding NO!

*Where do we go for knowledge, for wisdom, for relevant information to make our lives better? (50% choose Friends over an expert; then online, trusted family member, teacher/mentor, exper "behavioral scientists attribute this to 'simplicity bias' = give me a simple answer bc researching something complex, informed, realistic, & balanced too hard/time consuming"

**BUT what did God give us as a gift in order to find wisdom & instruction for life??= Himself! Through a covenant relationship where God called, preserved, favored, & shaped a people for Himself = Israel; God gave Himself to Israel as their Covenant God & them as a Cov. people!

-God spoke His *Word* & gave His truth and voice through His **Prophets** (who is God/relationship)
-God spoke His *Law* through His **Priests** (how do we live to please God and serve our neighbor)
BUT since He knew we needed help in the fine details of life, how to live in the 'inbetween,' God spoke *wisdom* and gave wise counsel through His **Wise men**, sages, Elders, and wise Kings.

TODAY...we have Bible! We look into Gods Word: into His character so we can see (like a mirror):

- A. Who we really are =What is our truest identity
- B. How we were created/designed to live =to be rightly related to a loving, cov. God in relationship
- C. What is it that we truly need = We need Christ to save us; His Spirit to empower us to live holy

What will be your decision in this life? Please God or Please self? HOW? Proverbs presents two options: -The way of blessing and life OR -The way of destruction and death. 2 roads. 2 destinations. 2 choices. 2 different realities. & 1 empowering gracious God to help you; His holy Spirit of wisdom to help you Will you accept His help ? Then press into Book of Proverbs.

Proverbs confronts our **delusions** that we can live healthy, wholesome, blessed lives independent from God, apart from Gods presence, power, and wisdom. That *somehow* we can thrive in a different way other than how we were created to function. Proverbs crushes the belief that our lives belong to us and that we get to live life as we choose on our terms without spiritual or eternal consequences.

The Bible IS God's Word, & His eternal wisdom has been granted to those who seek it, those who ask for it, and apply it to every area of their life and future. **You?** Blessing or destruction? Life or death? His Glory or your glory? We need to learn how to live wisely in leading our lives, our family, priorities, money, how to handle anger/conflict, temptation, fear, our words, self-control, love, marriage, attacks by enemies, our own sin, pride, & so much more = Spring Study

READ Proverbs 1:1-7 The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel: [What is the purpose of this book?]² To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding, ³ To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice, and integrity; ⁴ To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion, ⁵ A wise person will hear and increase in learning, And a person of understanding will acquire wise counsel, ⁶ To understand a proverb and a saying, The words of the wise and their riddles. ⁷ **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;** Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

This anthology, a book of sayings, was written for young men, young men of the royal court to prepare their life of service to their God and country. **Vs. 4: To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion**"

This was their road map on how to survive this wild world, a world full of evil, deception, lies, illusions, and falsity -all of which strain to appear as something good, or permissible, or even God's will. ***How can one discern what is true/false? Godly/evil? Wise/foolish?** - God Himself declares it, reveals it, reminds us of it. We look to God, His Nature & how He works in creation in alignment with His perfect character.

So, now *this* is for everyone (**royalty/not; rich or poor; men & women; religious or seeker**)=**ALL**
-How to live and grow in wisdom; how to honor God; how to live a **life-well lived**; to die in peace
-How NOT to waste your life; How to make much of your life as a steward of God's grace to you!

Vs. 2: To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding, ³ To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice, and integrity; How to live life =**Instr. manual**

****The author states there are three goals for us to gain as we read and apply Proverbs:**

1. God wants to use this book of wisdom to shape your character (to look like His; Ro. 8:29)
= **To know wisdom and instruction** –'to know' implies intimate knowledge = **experienced truth**

2. God wants to use this book of wisdom to teach us think rightly about life/truth/people
= **To discern the sayings of understanding** Ro. 12:2 *don't be conformed, but be transfigured by renew mind*
By God's wisdom, we can learn to live in light of what is really true about ourselves, one another, and this wonderful yet deeply flawed world. This is about life as God intended us to live it=**Glory**

-The author reminds us even the wisest of people can/will gain more wisdom in applying these tr
Vs. 5: A wise person will hear and **increase in learning, And a person of understanding will acquire wise counsel, ⁶ To understand a proverb and a saying, The words of the wise and their riddles.**

=Proverbs speaks of 4 types of people: 1. The **Wise**; 2. The **Foolish**; 3. The **Simple** (**unconvinced/easily swayed/gullible**); 4. The **Scoffer**(**ridiculer; mocker; disrespector; contempt; condescension**)
***what kind of person are you?** Where do you find your heart this morning? Hungry for? Striving?

3. God wants to use this book of wisdom to remind you the source of all Wisdom: Himself
Vs. 7: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom & instruction.

In this one verse, the whole of the theme of Proverbs is stated: If we get this right, everything else in our life will fall in place and give us a foundation to live well, suffer well, die well. =**Fear God**
= **To fear God is to understand His rightful place as God in the universe & in your life-no pride**
= **To fear God is to completely surrender to Him; yield your life, wants, rights, hope, future**
= **To fear God is to faithfully obey His Word & His will for your life** Jn 14:15 **"If u lv obey my co**
= **To Fear God is to make Jesus Christ your Savior & Lord, to follow Christ as a faithf disciple**

***God is Wisdom itself; Jesus is wisdom personified; Spirit is the life-changing giver of wisdom**

Christ in Proverbs: The Book of Proverbs is a gospel book b/c Jesus says all of Scripture points to Him (Lk. 24:27); Col. 2:3 “*Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*” “The Book of Proverbs is good news for bad people. It is about grace for sinners. It is about hope for failures. The book is about Jesus coming to us as our Counselor, our sage, our wise King, as the ultimate life coach. Jesus is a genius, the most competent thinker of all time. And He offers us both Himself and His wisdom as described in Proverbs. We can today live a Proverbs-driven life because Jesus first lived that wisdom life for us. As the One who lived wisdom, the One who is wisdom, the One who is the path to wisdom, & the One who supplies us endless wisdom, Jesus is present in all of the Proverbs as our guide & God to transform us into His image; christlike

What will we do with this wisdom? What will we do with Jesus? What will we do w/ His words?

Matthew 7:24-26 “*Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine, and [t]acts on them, will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell and the [w]floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not [a]ct on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell and the [w]floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and its collapse was great.*”

Ray Ortlund says “Wisdom is the grace of Christ beautifying our lives ... Wisdom is the gospel of Christ reshaping us for royalty, as God places us on His anvil and we trust Him enough to stay there until His work is done!”

So much of modern life is all about addition; adding possessions, experiences, relationships, efficiency, income and wealth, comfort & leisure, health, power, prestige, and influence, adding days to our life on OUR terms. But the Book of Proverbs is all about subtraction; Jesus helping us to rid ourselves of the goals, lies, and delusions of this world & learning to FEAR God rightly, to rid ourselves of pride and self-sufficiency; putting our hope in Christ alone & not just what He can offer us to make our lives better. What will you do with Jesus today?

What is the wisest thing you can do today? Repent? Confess? Obey? Be transformed?

APPLICATION

- 1. Where in your life do you need God’s wisdom applied most? Job? Relationship? Family?**
- 2. What decision is pending in your life that you can use a dose of God’s grace & help?**
- 3. What does it mean practically to “fear” the Lord in modern life? In your life?**
- 4. What can we infer from the fact that wisdom is still offered to those already wise?**
- 5. What’s the difference between Knowledge and Wisdom? How is that practically lived out?**