



Proverbs: God Whom We Trust

Memory Verse: Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Background

Proverbs is the 20th book of the Bible and the third book of poetry in the Old Testament. The very first verse in the book of Proverbs gives us the name of the author “The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel.” When Solomon was beginning his reign as king, God asked him to name a gift and it would be his. Solomon asked for “wisdom and knowledge” to rule God’s people (2 Chronicles 1:10). God granted his request and King Solomon was known as the wisest man on earth speaking over 3,000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:29-34), several hundred of which are recorded in the book of Proverbs. While Solomon was the main source for Proverbs, he was not the only contributor. Other authors named in the book of Proverbs are “the wise” (22:17; 24:23), Agur (30:1), and Lemuel (31:1).

King Solomon ruled Israel from about 971-931 B.C. and it is likely that the majority of the book of Proverbs was written during this time. The book was probably completed two centuries later around 700 BC, during the reign of Hezekiah according to Proverbs 25:1. During this time, the men of Hezekiah’s court compiled more proverbs of Solomon which may have been passed on through oral tradition.

The Short Story

Book of short, practical sayings that provide great wisdom and instruction for life.

What’s the Big Idea?

The book of Proverbs is not a book with a story; rather, it is a compilation of short sayings with the focus of living an effective life on earth. Wisdom is the major theme of Proverbs and the reader is encouraged to pursue it earnestly. The wisdom (or in Hebrew: *chokmah*) described in Proverbs is not just intellectual knowledge, but is a practical skillfulness or expertise of moral and ethical principles that, when applied, will result in a godly, successful life. These principles are applicable in numerous situations rather than instructions to follow in only a few specific instances. The topics in Proverbs cover everything from family, friends, life, death, finances, eating, enemies, love, peace, pride, anger, sex, sin, speech, and the fear of the Lord just to name a few. In writing the Proverbs, Solomon hoped that his readers would attain practical righteousness in all things and live their lives under the authority and direction of God, the true source of wisdom.

So What? Why is this book so important? What was God’s purpose for the book?

Proverbs was written to impart wisdom to the reader so that they might live a disciplined, moral, and skillful life (Proverbs 1:2-3). The principles of life found in the book of Proverbs are timeless, being applicable for the Israelites who first heard them to the believers of today. Proverbs 1:7 states, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” In order to gain wisdom, one must begin with a foundation. This foundation is the fear or awe and reverence for the Lord and His holiness that He so richly deserves. The Lord is the source and creator of true wisdom and knowledge. However, a foundation is meant to be built upon and part of having a fear of the Lord is to be loyal and obedient, growing in the knowledge of His Word, loving and serving others every day, and trusting Him in and for all things. By studying and applying the wisdom found in Proverbs, we will not only enjoy the life that God designed for us to live, but we will also become more and more like Christ Jesus who is the embodiment of wisdom.

**Material taken from various sources.*

Teaching Text

Proverbs 3:5-7 “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.”

Sermon-Based Discussion Questions

- Why is trusting in God mentioned so often in Proverbs by Solomon? Why is trusting God wise?
- How are we suppose to demonstrate our trust in the Lord? What fills your heart?
- Read Ex 14:31. What caused Israel to trust God? What would reinforce your trust in God?
- What are we not to lean on? What should we lean on? What are you leaning on?
- Why are we given the caution to not be wise in your own eyes? Who is the source of wisdom?

Practical Application

- Why is it seemingly so difficult to trust in the Lord in certain areas? Where is hard for you to trust?
- What is your decision making process? How do you incorporate God into it?
- What is one way you can acknowledge God in your life this week? How do you do it daily?
- Where do you need to really press into having more trust in God? What does it look like in your life?
- What do you need to place into the lap of God? Do you leave it there or pick it back up?

Hitting the Highpoints

- 1:7, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, fools despise wisdom and instruction”
- 6:6 “Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.”
- 10:1 “A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.”
- 11:22 “Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout is a beautiful woman without discretion.”
- 13:24 “Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.”
- 15:1 “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”
- 16:3, “Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”
- 17:28, “Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.”
- 18:10, The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.”
- 27:6, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.”

Bonus Features:Where is Jesus?

Jesus is the very embodiment of wisdom and THE living example of what it means to be wise. His whole life was subject to the Father’s will and lived with the proper perspective of God and others. Like much of the life the book of Proverbs speaks of, Christ’s actions were not of worldly wisdom, but godly wisdom, righteousness, and obedience. By studying and applying the wisdom found in Proverbs, we will not only enjoy the life that God designed for us to live, but we will also become more and more like Christ Jesus.

Personal Takeaways and Notes