

SERMON OUTLINE

'Getting it right: wise words for life'

'The Book of Proverbs'

Study - 1

Proverbs 1 v1 - 7

What is the Book Proverbs all about? Why has it been given to us? And why, in coming to an understanding of its teaching, is it so very important to live out its principles, priorities and promises in our day-to-day Christian lives?

1. THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Key Verse - 4 v7 - 8. You can have so much - all the wealth, intelligence, good looks, skills and abilities, strength of character, social advantages etc, but unless you have wisdom, you are without the most important attribute of all. It's life giving, life enabling, life shaping, life enhancing, life renewing. See - 3 v13 - 18.

The purpose of the book - attaining this wisdom. See - v2a. And note, from v2b, all the other words which enlarge on this word 'wisdom' - discipline, insight, prudent, discerning, guidance. Key Question - Do we want to be well instructed about life and how it's meant to be lived? Do we want to be insightful, prudent, discerning, and always in the right place doing the right thing? Then, wisdom is what we need - and we find it here in the Book of Proverbs.

Note - Whenever we cry out in a certain situation - 'What am I going to do - what am I going to say, which way am I going to take, just how am I going to respond?', it's wisdom that we're crying out for.

Note - This wisdom is not worldly (Is 29 v14) - it's heavenly. See - James 3 v7. To have it is to be wise - not to have it is to be a fool. See - v7b. The fool says - 'I can manage and run my life on my own - I don't need anyone else's help - far less the help of God.

Note - God's wisdom in Proverbs applies to every area of our lives. It's this wisdom that enables us to live lives that please God and honour God, and which know His blessing.

2. THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

See - v1. Notice:-

A. HOW SOLOMON RECEIVED GOD'S WISDOM

See - 1 Kings 3 v1 - 15

B. HOW SOLOMON EXERCISED GOD'S WISDOM

See - 1 Kings 3 v16 - 28 & 4 v29 - 34.

C. HOW SOLOMON NEGLECTED GOD'S WISDOM

See - 1 Kings 10 & 11. Solomon in his later years ('there's no fool like an old fool') failed to obey and practice the principles, priorities and promises set out in his own Book of Proverbs. This is why, in looking for an example of this wisdom, we need to look beyond Solomon - to Jesus. See - Matt 12 v42 & Col 2 v3. The great thing about Jesus - He always got things right.

Key Point - Becoming wise means us becoming more and more like Jesus.

3. THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Key Question - How can this wisdom of which the Book of Proverbs speaks become ours? Answer - Like Solomon, we need to ask for it. See - James 1 v5. Note - In our asking, there are 2 prerequisites:-

A. WE NEED TO KNOW THE LORD

Key Verse - 9 v10. Note - the title 'Lord' is the covenant name of God. In other words, the first step to wisdom is in knowing the Lord - that is, becoming a Christian.

B. WE NEED TO FEAR THE LORD

See also - v7. Fear here is reverence and awe - it's being humble before His greatness. See - 11 v2.

Key Question - What's the evidence that we both know the Lord and fear the Lord? See - Lk 6 v46 - 49. To hear, receive, obey and do the word of the Lord is wisdom - this is the life which will know the blessing of God.