

# Putting the Proverbs to Use

## Introduction

### 1. The Christian walk should be a walk of wisdom.

Ephesians 5:15-17 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

**A. There are two books which can immensely help us to be wise (Proverbs & James).**

### 2. This morning I want us to think about the book of Proverbs.

## Facts on Proverbs

### 1. The title of the book of Proverbs comes from the first line.

**A. The term for "Proverb" comes from a root idea meaning "parallel" or "similar."**

**1) A Proverb is "a description by way of comparisons" (Prov 13:1).**

Proverbs 13:1 A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

## **2. The Book of Proverbs is classified as "wisdom literature."**

### **A. A proverb is defined as "a short, self-evident statement" (Proverbs 1:7).**

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

#### **1) A catchy way of expressing a truth for remembrance.**

### **B. Yet, the Book of Proverbs is not simply a collection of wise or witty sayings.**

#### **1) It's a distinct philosophy of life (Proverbs 1:7, 10).**

Proverbs 1:10 My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.

### **C. And these are not just popular sayings, but capsules of wisdom from those who knew the law of God, and were guided by God.**

#### **1) Proverbs are generally true, but not absolute in every case (Proverbs 22:6, 8).**

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

### **3. The Book is made of many proverbs.**

#### **A. Solomon's proverbs.**

##### **1) Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:32).**

1 Kings 4:32 He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five.

##### **2) His wisdom to speak was a direct gift from God.**

**1 Kings 4:29-31**

##### **3) His proverbs fall into 2 categories.**

**a) Those he personally arranged (cc. 1-24).**

**b) Those arranged by scribes of Hezekiah's time (cc. 25-29).**

**1. Proverbs spoken by Agur c. 30).**

**2. Proverbs spoken by Lemuel c. 31).**

#### 4. The purpose of the Book is simple, yet profound.

##### A. The chief purpose is to impart wisdom (Proverbs 1:1-6).

##### Proverbs 1:1-6

##### 1) The Book is designed:

a) To make a person wise.

b) To learn how to:

1. Act wisely and righteously.

2. Treat others with fairness.

c) To give:

1. To the ignorant, common sense.

2. To the young, sound advice.

3. To the wise, even more wisdom.

B. The Book has been called "the best guide book of success a young man can follow."

C. The key thought in the Book is "the fear of the Lord" (14 times).

1) "The fear of the Lord" refers to a profound respect and abiding reverence for God, acknowledging Him as the ruler of all things, including our lives.

2) It describes a wholesome, awe, and respect for God which expresses itself in obedience, reliance on God and deliberate avoidance of evil.

**5. The theme of the Book is "Wisdom" (104 times).****A. Wisdom is:**

- 1) The right use of one's knowledge, insight, and skill to the glory of God.**
  - a. In the Bible, wisdom is always God-oriented & practical.**
- 2) Wisdom is not ---- the same as knowledge (Solomon - Ecclesiastes).**
  - a. It is the use of knowledge in a practical or successful way.**
- 3) The power of judging rightly and following the soundest course of action, based on knowledge, experience, and understanding.**
- 4) Understanding the nature and purpose of trials and knowing how to meet them victoriously.**
- 5) The ordering of one's life by God-given counsel.**

## **B. Wisdom comes from God.**

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

### **1) Wisdom originates in the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10).**

Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

### **2) Three things are needed to attain true wisdom:**

#### **a. An available revelation from God (Proverbs 2:6).**

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding;

#### **b. A seeking heart. Proverbs 2:1-5**

#### **c. A submissive life.**

Psalms 119:100 I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts.

## **C. The Bible defines wisdom in terms of one's relationship with God rather than one's formal education.**

### **1) ILLUSTRATION: The boss yells at you -- Yell back, or be kind.**

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath, a harsh word stirs up anger.

## **D. The Book of Proverbs shows the tremendous value of wisdom.**

