WHY THE PROVERBS?

**DATE: 7/20/2014 pm**

**TEXT: Proverbs 1:1**

**INTRODUCTION**

Today we begin a study of the Book of Proverbs

Proverbs is sometimes called the Wisdom Book of the OT

The others are Job, Ecclesiastes and some of the Psalms

The writers of these books wrestled with some of the most difficult questions of life

They sought to understand Life's Problems from God's Perspective

After all, just because we’re believers, and walk by faith,

… Doesn't mean we put our minds on the shelf and stop thinking

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**THE PURPOSE OF THE PROVERBS**

The Lord expects us to apply ourselves intellectually and do some serious thinking as we study His Word

**Matthew 22:37 – *“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind”* [Spirit, Soul, Body]**

**Isaiah 1:18 *– “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD”***

Every Ruler had their council of *“wise men”* whom they consulted when making important decisions

- Joseph was considered a Wise man in Egypt

- Daniel and his friends were honored for their Wisdom

According to **Ephesians 5:15**, God wants you and I to -

***“walk circumspectly [carefully], not as fools but as wise”***

Understanding the book of Proverbs can help us do this

It isn't enough simply to be educated and have knowledge

(As important as education is)

We also need Wisdom, which is the ability to use Knowledge

Wise men and women have the; *competence to grasp the meaning of a situation and understand what to do and how to do it in the right way at the right time*

Biblical Wisdom begins with a right relationship with the Lord – **1:7 …**

The Wise person believes

- That there is a God

- That He is the Creator and Ruler of all things

- That He has put within His creation a divine order that, if obeyed, leads ultimately to success

**Hebrews 11:6 – *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him”***

Wise people also assert that there is a moral law operating in the world

… a principle of Divine Justice that one day will see the Wicked Judged, and the Righteous Rewarded

Biblical Wisdom has little, if any relationship, to a person's IQ or education

Why? Because it is a matter of Moral and Spiritual understanding

It has to do with character and values; it means looking at the world through the eyes of God's Truth

Wisdom isn't something Theoretical; it's something very Practical that affects every area of life

- It gives order and purpose

- It gives discernment in making right decisions

- It provides a sense of fulfillment for the glory of God

Wisdom allows us to understand the Principles and Purposes that govern God’s World

… So that as we obey God, everything works for us, and not against us

**Romans 8:28 –** ***“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”***

This doesn't mean we don't experience trials and difficulties

Because of Sin, trials and difficulties are a regular part of life

But it means we have the ability to deal with these adversities, successfully, so that we grow spiritually, and the Lord is Glorified

People with Wisdom have the skill to face life Honestly, Courageously, and to manage it Successfully …

The result is - God's Purposes are fulfilled in their lives

The pages of history are filled with the names of brilliant and gifted people who were *smart* enough to become rich and famous

But were not *Wise* *enough* to be successful in Life

**Ill.** Before his death, one of the world's richest men said that he would have given all his wealth to make one of his six marriages succeed

It's one thing to make a Living, but another to make a Life

**Quote:** Mark Twain said – *“Always do right—this will gratify some and astonish the rest”*

President Harry Truman liked the quotation so much he had it framed and placed on the wall behind his desk in the Oval Office

Sayings like Twain’s are like Cockle Burrs, which stick in our minds

You find yourself recalling them and quoting them

This is especially true of the Proverbs

The Proverbs contains much more than clever sayings based on man's investigation and interpretation of human experience

Because God inspired this book, it is a part of Divine Revelation and relates the concerns of human life to God and the eternal

The book of Proverbs is quoted in the New Testament

… therefore has a practical application to the lives of every believer

According to **II Timothy 3:16, 17 – *“All Scripture is... profitable”***

It’s profitable in 4 ways -

- For ***“doctrine”*** *…* what's *right*

- For ***“reproof”*** *…* what's *not right*

- For ***“correction”*** *…* how to *get right*

- For ***“instruction in righteousness”*** *…*how to *stay right*

You will find all 4 of these Purposes fulfilled in the Book of Proverbs

These inspired sayings teach us about God, man, sin, creation, and a host of other doctrinal topics

The Proverbs Rebuke and Reprove sinners for their lying, laziness, drunkenness, immorality, and other personal failures

But Proverbs doesn't stop with Conviction

The book also administers Correction,

Telling us how to turn from sin and mend our ways

How to Repent

It shows us how to stay on the path of Wisdom and not stray

Traditional manmade proverbs don't always agree with each other and aren't always right

For Example -

*“Look before you leap”* advises caution, while …

*"He who hesitates is lost"*

…warns us not to miss our golden opportunity

Which maxim do you follow?

*“Many hands make light work”* is contradicted by …

*“Too many cooks spoil the broth”*

But we can always trust the Book of Proverbs

The Proverbs in Scripture are consistent with each other and with the total pattern of Divine Truth given in the Bible

Besides that, the children of God have the Holy Spirit to guide them as they seek for God's Wisdom in God's Word

Because the Holy Spirit is called ***“the Spirit of wisdom”***

Listen to what the Bible says …

**Isaiah 11:2 – *“And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;”***

[This is specifically speaking about the Lord Jesus]

**Ephesians 1:17 – *“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him:”***

Believers, who learn the Proverbs, will have, at their disposal, the Wisdom they need for making right decisions day after day

The Truths found in Proverbs touch upon every important area of human life, such as acquiring and using wealth,

making and keeping friends, building a happy home, avoiding temptation and trouble, controlling our feelings,

disciplining the tongue, and building godly character

The Book of Proverbs has received less than its share of attention at the hands of Christians, though

The reason for this is found in the fact that most want to relegate it to the Mosaic Law

This would be a Big mistake

This would be tragic; because Solomon’s practical knowledge is one of the greatest needs for today

His concern was for the everyday need of Applied Wisdom

**THE WRITERS**

The book of Proverbs, as noted in **v. 1** was penned largely by Solomon

**Chapters 1-22:16**

Then there are some unidentified Wise men in …

**Chapters 22:17 – 24:34**

Many believe this is still Solomon

And the final 2 chapters were written by Agur and King Lemmuel, respectively

**Chapter 30:1; 31:1**

**THE OUTLINE FOR THE BOOK**

The book is divided into 6 parts

- **Chapters 1-7** is addressed to Solomon’s son

- **Chapters 8, 9** present the Blessedness of Wisdom

- **Chapters 10-19** sets forth the Folly of Sin

- **Chapters 20-29** is a list of further Warning / Instruction

- **Chapter 30** is the Proverbs of Agur

- **Chapter 31** is the Proverbs of King Lemmuel

**WHAT IS A PROVERB?**

The word Proverbmeans *to be like, a comparison; noting likeness in things unlike, contrasting*

Webster – A Moral sentence or maxim that is enigmatical;

Enigmatical means *relating to* or *containing a riddle, something obscurely concealed*

… a dark saying of the wise that required interpretation

**WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A PROVERB?**

The Proverbs are brief, concrete, and pithy

They illustrate Divine Truth with Diverse Applications

We will study through this Book, Topically

Let’s begin the Introduction to this Series on this wonderful Book

Called ***“Understanding the Proverbs”***

And has we study, I want to try and answer this Question

***“Why the Proverbs?”***