

Proverbs: Choosing Wisdom in a Foolish World

The Importance of Wisdom – Get It!

Proverbs 1:1-9, 20-33

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / May 20, 2018

Things to know to help you get the most out of reading the book of Proverbs:

1. Proverbs isn't a set of 'simple steps' that lead you to the good life. It's a book of poetry that was meant to instill wisdom as you reflect on it and wrestle with what's being said.
2. The Proverbs are life principles that are generally true. They're not money-back guarantees, because life is more complex than that and we live in a fallen, broken world.
3. Proverbs was designed to be cumulative.

The book of Proverbs is about wisdom and how life actually works.

I. So What Is Wisdom?

A. The Wise Person Has Perception or Insight for Living

Proverbs 1:2 "... to perceive the words of understanding."

NIV "... for understanding words of insight."

The Hebrew word for insight means to notice differences or to see fine distinctions that others can't see.

B. The Wise Person Is Prudent about What Needs to Be Done and the Order It Should Happen

Proverbs 1:4 "To give prudence to the simple..."

The Hebrew word for 'prudence' means practical or strategic. In other words, how to get things done and not just talk about it.

C. The Wise Person Has Discretion about What to Avoid

Proverbs 1:4 "... to the young man knowledge and discretion."

Discretion is the ability to see through the deception of temptations that come at us every day.

The Hebrew word for 'discretion' actually conveys the idea that depth of character is what enables this person to see through the temptation.

D. The Wise Person Isn't Looking for a Technique to Master and Isn't Satisfied with the Accumulation of Information

1. There is no technique for wisdom

Wisdom is the accumulated character and humility of being reoriented to the realities of how life works according to God's Word and God's Ways. It cannot be downloaded in a moment.

2. Wisdom is far more than the accumulation of information

You become a wise person through years of training, learning, getting to know God and His Word, getting to know your own heart, by going through suffering and being humble enough to receive correction from others so that you slowly, over time, start to become a discerning, insightful, prudent, and wise person.

II. Why Do We Need Wisdom So Much?

Proverbs 1:32 "For the turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them."

V. 32 says that lacking wisdom can literally kill you.

A. Because Without Wisdom We Are So Out of Touch with Reality

V. 32 uses two different words to describe why we're so out of touch with reality and how we go off the rails into destruction. They are the words 'simple' and 'fool.'

1. The Simpleton Cares Way Too Much about What Other People Think

The Hebrew word 'simple' means young and naïve people who are not informed and rooted enough so they are easily persuaded to go along with the crowd.

2. The Fool Doesn't Care Nearly Enough about What Other People Think

A fool is someone who is wise in their own eyes. They don't listen to anybody, because they are so set in their own ways.

B. Because the Consequences of Living Without Wisdom Are So Serious

V. 20-33 are terrifying when you read what God's Word says will happen to you if you reject wisdom and choose to live as a simpleton, a fool, or a combination of both!

III. How Do We Get Wisdom?

A. You Have to Be Humble Enough to Know that You Need Wisdom

Proverbs 1:3 "To receive the instruction of wisdom..."

B. You Have to Really Want It

Proverbs 1:32 "... the complacency of fools will destroy them."