

Life-Study of Proverbs – Messages 1-5

Introduction

Proverbs in Hebrew is *mishle*, meaning “similitudes, proverbs, parables,” to represent **general truths**. Proverbs is a collection of the **words of the wise**. The main writers and collectors are Solomon, who wrote three thousand proverbs, and Hezekiah, who added some proverbs of the forefather. The **theme** of Proverbs is that this book consists **of words of wisdom teaching people how to behave and how to build up their character in the human life**. Since the book of proverbs were collected mainly by two kings of Judah in the age of the law, the book of Proverbs may be considered a subsidiary to the law. Proverbs instructs people how to behave and how to build themselves up according to what God is.

The book of Proverbs is a particular book among the books of the Bible. It has a particular character; that is, it presents to us the words of wisdom by many ancient wise men, which is unanimously considered good by all the people who read it. But **whether it is really good or not depends upon what kind of reader you are**. **If you are an ethical person with a strong mind and have a desire to be perfect as a genuine moral person, surely this book would help you to make a success in your pursuit of perfection**. However, **it does not help you to be a person who lives in his spirit according to the Spirit of God** who dwells in you for the accomplishment of God’s eternal economy, that is, to produce and build up the Body of Christ which consummates the New Jerusalem as God’s heart’s desire and ultimate goal.

The Principles for Man to Live a Proper Human Life

The first principle for man to live a proper human life is **revering God**. We should not only worship God but also revere Him. To revere God is to consider and regard Him in everything, never forgetting that He is the wonderful God who created us. To revere God is to fear God, trust God, and honour God. The second principle is **needing wisdom**; we are always in need of the wisdom of God. The third principle is the **honouring of one’s parents**. After God, we should respect our parents, having regard for them, honouring them, and obeying them. The fourth is to **hold marriage in honour**.

Touching the Word of God by Our New Man

To read the Bible by the new man is very different. **A person in the new man exercises his spirit to contact the Lord**. When we approach the Bible in this way, exercising our spirit, we have the deep feeling and sense that we are approaching, touching, and contacting God. When we come to the Bible to contact God, we should not only read but pray-read the Word. **Apart from pray-reading, the book of Proverbs is merely a collection of proverbs**. But when we pray-read Proverbs, our pray-reading causes all the proverbs to become words of Spirit and life to us.

In reading the Proverbs and even of the entire Bible, many Christians receive only teachings, admonitions, exhortations, proverbs, and precepts to cultivate their self and to build up the natural man, who has been fully condemned by God. **We must learn to come to the Word of God as those who are approaching God, not to receive proverbs and teachings but to receive nourishment and enlightenment, so that we may know that, according to God, we should always be conformed to the death of Christ by the power of His resurrection which is the consummated Spirit, who is the reality of the resurrection of Christ.**

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