

Life-Study of Proverbs – Messages 6-8

Coming to Proverbs to Cultivate our Regenerated New Man

Five matters are revealed in the Bible. The Bible first reveals God. The second thing the Bible shows us is God's speaking, God's word. Then this Word became flesh. Fourth the Son of God in the flesh as the Word became the life-giving Spirit. Ephesians 6:17 shows us that the Spirit is the word. Hence, we have God, the Word, Christ in the flesh as the embodiment of the Word, the Spirit, and the word again.

The Bible also shows us the God-men, the new man, the new creation, the Body of Christ, and the New Jerusalem. All of these issue from God, the Word, Christ as the embodiment of the Word, the Spirit, and the Spirit as the word.

When we come to contact the word in the Bible by our natural man, by our mind, it is not the word of God to us. But when we come to the Bible by exercising our spirit to contact God, the word becomes the Spirit. This should be our experience as we read the book of Proverbs.

Because we still have our humanity, we need the proper, spiritual proverbs, not to cultivate our natural man but to cultivate our regenerated new man.

The Principles for Man to Live a Proper Human Life

A number of portions in Proverbs speak of the Lord's dealing with man. Proverbs also speaks of dealing with the Lord, dealing with parents, dealing with others, dealing with neighbours, with the poor, with evil men, with enemies, with oneself, and concerning visions. Finally, we also see general words of wisdom in Proverbs.

Using Proverbs for Building Up the New Man

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs are placed at the end of the section of the law, just before the prophets. They belong to the section of the law. In particular, Proverbs may be considered a subsidiary, or a helper to the law. Solomon, the writer of these three books, was the last writer in this section. Of these three books, the first is on the real wisdom; the second, on vanity; and the third, on satisfaction.

Proverbs gives us wisdom to be a proper person and to do the right things. But for whom is this wisdom given, and how should this one use it? To use the book of Proverbs properly, we must know God's economy. A great part of God's economy is His redemption. In God's redemption the first part is to terminate, to destroy, the fallen old man. The second part is to rescue what was created by God, the God-created humanity. In the third part of His redemption, God uplifts the redeemed God-created humanity.

God's redemption is according to His economy. In one sense, God's redemption has already been accomplished, but the application, or the practice of God's redemption requires a long process. It takes time in God's economy for us to experience the redemption in Christ's death, in Christ's resurrection, and in the all-inclusive, life-giving Spirit. Redemption in its entirety was accomplished by God in an instant, but in practice and application redemption is still not finished. We have not yet been fully redeemed, but we are on the way. This is God's economy. Our God is omnipotent, yet for us He has to be very patient and do things slowly.

According to His economy Proverbs should not be used to build up the old man. The big proverbs, like nuggets, and the small ones, like gems, are for us to build up our new man. While we are still living in this body, we need Proverbs to give us instruction on how to live rightly in so many aspects, in order to build up our new man. (Life-Study of Proverbs – Messages 6-8)