



Series: Bible Survey

Lesson: 25. Proverbs

- **Introduction**

- Author: Mostly Solomon with contributions from Agur and Lemuel
- Date: Most/All made during Solomon's reign and edited together at least during Hezekiah's reign
- A proverb is a _____ statement about life that doesn't have to be true 100% of the time to still represent wisdom about life.
- Context:
 - Solomon was blessed by God to be "wiser than all men," like no one before or since (cf. 1 Kings 3:11–12; 4:29–34), so Proverbs appears to be mainly a collection of the 'greatest hits' of his 3,000 proverbs to edify future generations.
 - He addresses it *primarily* not as the king, but as a _____.
 - Sadly, Solomon and Rehoboam would both go on to live foolishly in ways that harmed both them and the nation (cf. 1 Kings 11–12).

- The main contrasts in Proverbs are wise/foolish and righteous/wicked, but other concepts are treated various ways.
 - Most other concepts are morally neutral, so their treatment is based on _____.
 - Studying *all* appearances of a concept does help get a more well-rounded view of the subject, though.

- Many proverbs deal with the consequences of different kinds of behaviors from a human perspective, but that is not to deny a belief in God's sovereignty to bring about those consequences.

- Main themes:
 - The preciousness of wisdom and the consequences of folly
 - The very real difference between the choices of the righteous and the wicked
 - How godly thinking should affect *every* area of our lives

- **The Structure of Proverbs**

- Ch's 1–9 – Solomon's wisdom to his son
 - After a brief prologue introducing the whole book, the first main section is occupied with the importance of wisdom, appeals to seek it, and warnings against folly.

- There are also several statements about the value of fearing YHWH, especially because of it is the foundation of wisdom.
 - Among the many examples of folly to avoid, the most weight is given to avoiding the _____:
 1. This stresses the importance of marriage and the wisdom in protecting its sanctity.
 2. She personifies sin and folly by showing how tempting they are, how destructive they are, how they don't have true concern for the well-being of those they destroy, etc.
 - Many in the past used to take wisdom personified here to refer to Christ, but this is unwise:
 1. Language about wisdom being 'possessed' and 'established' by YHWH, as well as being 'born' before time all imply a denial of His equality with the Father.
 2. Wisdom is personified as feminine in multiple places.
- 10:1–22:16 – Short proverbs of Solomon
 - These are mostly _____ between wise/foolish and righteous/wicked.
 - They are largely independent, but there is some grouping.
 - 22:17–24:34 – Longer 'sayings of the wise'
 - They are mostly two, but also four or six verses long.
 - These are largely descriptive proverbs.

- Ch's 25–29 – Solomon's proverbs collected by Hezekiah's men
 - They are mostly short, descriptive proverbs.
 - They are grouped together by theme into very large units.

- Ch 30 – The words of Agur
 - The first half consists of a statement of humility followed by some general proverbs.
 - The second half is made of groups of things that share something in common that helps you understand that common trait better.

- Ch 31 – The words of King Lemuel
 - It begins with general wisdom for the king (though still profitable for all).
 - The 'excellent wife' section is set as an _____ poem.

Discussion:

1. Why is 24:27 a part of inspired Scripture?
2. What is the difference between biblical wisdom and human wisdom?

FOR REFLECTION: How can you use Proverbs in your daily life? In your parenting? In your other discipleship? In other areas of life?

Blanks: general, father, context, adulteress, contrasts, acrostic