

01 – THE SIMPLE

Facts About Proverbs

a.) Proverbs Deals with the Practical Side of Life

- ✓ As believers, we live in two worlds: the spiritual world & the natural world. Spiritually speaking, we're children of God! We're blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places, and we're the righteousness of God in Christ!
- ✓ We may be the righteousness of God in Christ, yet we still have to earn a living, pay the bills, wash the dishes and live with people. That's where the Book of Proverbs comes in. The theme of PROVERBS is: Applying the wisdom of God to our everyday life.
- ✓ b.) Proverbs is a Book That's Written to Children
- ✓ Throughout the book you'll see the term, "My son". This particular word for "son" means "the builder of the family name".
- ✓ In Proverbs, we see a father talking to his teen-aged son, instructing him on the practical issues of life (Prov. 1:8). Things like friendship, marriage, temptation, holding down a job, handling finances, and how to live a long time on the earth.
- ✓ SIDE NOTE: You have something to do with **how long you live** on the earth! I didn't always believe that! I thought we came from the "manufacturer" with an "expiry date". I thought God gave us a certain number of days, and when those days ran out, He called us home.
- ✓ The Book of Proverbs doesn't teach that. It's true that "it's appointed unto man ONCE to die" (Heb. 9:27), but there doesn't seem to be an appointed TIME, that you'll die. According to Proverbs, there are things that will *lengthen* or *shorten* your life.

Proverbs 10:27 (ERV) – "Respect for the Lord will add years to your life, but the wicked will have their lives cut short."

Prov. 9:11 (CJB)– "By wisdom your days will be increased, and years will be added to your life."

Psalms 55:23 (ERV) – "Murderers and deceitful men will die before their life is half finished." ("... their lifespan will be cut in half.")

c.) Proverbs Is a Book of Wisdom

- ✓ There are three key words that will help us unlock the Book – knowledge, understanding and wisdom. **Knowledge** is "gathering the facts". **Understanding** is "arranging the facts", so "the lights come on". ("Oh, I see it!") But **wisdom** is "the ability to apply the facts to your current situation". It's when you *apply* the Word to your life that freedom and success become yours.

d.) Proverbs Discusses Several Kinds of People

- ✓ Rather than study 31 chapters of seemingly unrelated verses, we're going to focus on the **PEOPLE** that are mentioned in Proverbs. In this series, we'll look at the simple, the fool, the scoffer, the wise, the sluggard, and at least four kinds of women.

1. The Simple

- ✓ It almost sounds like an insult to call someone "simple", but really, it's not. The word "simple" doesn't mean "slow" or "stupid". "Simple" means, "**young and inexperienced**". It means to be "**naïve; easily influenced**"; maybe even a bit gullible".
- ✓ Simple people aren't bad or stupid. They **just lack the experience and foresight** that are needed to avoid the pitfalls of life.

Prov. 22:3 – “Wise people see danger coming and avoid it, but **the simple ones walk right into it.**”

- ✓ Why did he walk into it? He never saw it! (He doesn’t see what older, more experienced people see.)

Prov. 14:15 – “A simple person is **easily misled**, because **he believes everything he’s told** ...” (He’s over-trusting! That’s a characteristic of youth! We all start out as “simple”, but you don’t stay there!)

- ✓ **It isn’t a sin to be simple. It’s just incredibly dangerous.** A simple person is living at a crossroads. With the right influences, he will become wise. With the wrong influences, he can become a fool, or worse.

The Biggest Mistakes Simple People Make

a.) They Forsake the Guide of Their Youth – Prov. 2:17

- ✓ The “guide of her youth” is her parents. When you’re young, God gives you parents to guide you toward wise decisions. Unfortunately, she thought she knew better. She forsook the guide of her youth, and she suffered for it.

b.) They Go to Other Simple People for Advice

1 Kings 12:8 – “**But Rehoboam rejected the advice of the older men and instead asked the opinion of the young men he’d grown up with.**”

- ✓ That’s a huge mistake! And in following his friends’ advice, Rehoboam split the kingdom.

c.) They Allow Negative Influences into Their Lives

- ✓ Essentially, a simple person is a blank slate. He’ll be influenced and

shaped by those around him – positive or negative.

Prov. 13:20 – “**If you have wise people as your friends, you will become wise yourself. But a friend of fools shall become just like them.**”

d.) They Ignore Wisdom’s Warnings

Prov. 1:22,25 – “**How long, O simple ones, will you love simplicity? You neglected all my counsel and were not willing to accept my reproof.**”

- ✓ I’ll Say It Again: It’s not a sin to be simple. It is, however, a sin to reject wisdom, and stay simple.

The Smartest Thing Simple People Can Do

Psalms 119:130 – “**The entrance of your word gives light, it gives understanding to the simple.**”

Psalms 19:7 – “**The Word of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.**”

- ✓ THE WORD is the cure for simplicity! It can give you wisdom and understanding beyond your years!

If This Is You ...

a.) Get Into the Word (and Listen to Your Parents)

- ✓ Years ago, at a Promise Keepers meeting, one of the speakers gave an excellent illustration. He set some REAL bear traps on the stage (open and ready to snap shut). He blindfolded a teenager and told her that she’d have to walk across the stage. She appeared nervous.

- ✓ Just then, her father took her by the arm, and said, “Come with me, I’ll get you across.” Of course, he led her there safely. What an

excellent illustration of life! There are certain things that youth can't see. But their parents can see the dangers and can lead them through safely – if their children will listen.

b.) Choose Your Friends Wisely

Prov. 13:20 – “He that walks with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”

If This Is Your Child ...

a.) Recognize Their Vulnerability

- ✓ Don't be like the parents on “The Cosby Show” who wouldn't discuss “matters of the heart” with their children. (That's possibly the most dangerous minefield they'll have to navigate. If you leave them to their peers and their hormones, they're *going* to get hurt.)

b.) When They're Young, YOU Have Input Concerning Their Influences

- ✓ That includes their friends, the internet, and their phone. As parents, you're the gatekeeper of your child's life when they're young. (You may have to make some unpopular decisions, but you're called to be their parent, not their friend.)

Song of Sol. 8:8 – “We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts (she's not a teenager yet): what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall (if she sets wise boundaries on her own), we will build upon her a palace of silver (we'll honor her for her wise choices): and if she be a door (wide open, no discernment, lets anything through), we will enclose her with boards of cedar (we'll have to show more care and guidance, and limit her exposure to those influences.)”