

Proverbs Study Guide #7
Proverbs 1-31

Instruction

Introduction: Any new subject is like a foreign language. The Bible and things about God are subjects that are new and foreign to every person. As we learn how to speak a foreign language, so we must learn to speak the language of God in the Bible. If this thought is not understood the result may be minimal, the passion missing, and the frustration considerable.

If you wish to learn Spanish, or learn a profession or trade, the basic procedure is the same. Before you understand Spanish, or medicine or carpentry, you must learn key terms and what they mean. You can't very well make a good sentence if you don't know at least a few words of Spanish, or make a diagnosis in medicine if you don't know the body parts, or get a combination square out of the tool box if you don't know what it is.

Consider how a child learns to speak. You teach him nouns by emphasizing a single word. Great emphasis is put on words like "mommy", "car", "dolly", etc. Then come verbs, a word or a phrase at a time, like "come here", or "look".

This thought applies fully to learning the mechanics of the Bible. The Bible is written to understand on several levels of meaning and its applications are many. Learning the schematics and grammar and some main words in the Bible is only the kindergarten of mechanics that may at least commence to open a way to understand the Bible on a simple surface level.

Learn the Bible like learning any new topic or language. With great emphasis learn the names of the books of the Bible in order. Memorize key words, key verses with their address so you can find them again (i.e. chapter and verse). What is the topic, the main thought, the time frame, the reason for the writing, the writer of each book, etc. ?

Take no word or words for granted. It is too easy to pass over words that seem familiar but that you may not be able to spell or define or compare to other similar, but different words. Those who speak their native language carelessly will tend to speak "Bible" the same way. It is crucial in understanding the Bible to be aware of each word, each term, the tense of each term. For example, the Bible never even hints that God has more than one eternal purpose. Yet carelessness with the Holy Word may find us speaking of His eternal purposes, in plural.

This carelessness in "speaking Bible" is a serious error. It makes it impossible for God, who is the Word, to transmit His thought through us because it can't make it through the careless filters of our native language passing over loose and careless tongues. It is serious to speak for God what God has not spoken, to add to it human thought as though the revelation of God is lacking, to carelessly speak His words as a pretext instead of as a text and out of context.

No matter how much we wish to be skilled in the Bible, if we don't speak the language of the Bible accurately, carefully, thoroughly (as opposed to selectively) and respect it fully as the language of God, it will be a very limited language we speak, and those who hear and learn from us will hear something other than, or in addition to, what God intends.

In our native language, for example, "Americanese" is the result of taking too much license with the pure English of that spoken by the most educated form in England. Anglicans are appalled at what passes for English among the American population. Similarly, God may be appalled at the carelessness, the incompleteness, the sloppiness, the presumption and arrogance with which His believers speak in attempting to receive, to gain wisdom, to understand, and to even give others instruction in a Book that has escaped their careful and honorable attention. We must be teachable and able to receive instruction before we can be helped or help others.

The book of Proverbs contains many words key to understanding human life, especially human life that is to engage itself with divine life. Following are some of these words. Compare each word as it is used in several different verses, chapters and contexts in this book. Note contrasts, progression of thought, exceptions, promises, circumstances in which the word may have a different meaning, etc. Exercise yourself to drink in these words as written on page thirteen. Last lesson we considered “understanding”, this lesson we will consider “instruction”.

1. Wisdom (Proverbs Study Guide #5) (Proverbs 1:2, 3, 7, 20, etc)
2. Understanding (Proverbs Study Guide #6) (Proverbs 1:2, 5, 6, etc)

3. **Instruction**

Proverbs 1:2

1:3

1:7

1:8

4:1

4:13

5:12, 13

5:23

6:23

8:10

8:33

10:17

12:1

13:1

13:18

15:5

15:32

15:33

16:22

19:20

19:27

21:11

23:12

23:23

24:32

Isaiah 40:14

Isaiah 28:26

Daniel 11:33

Deuteronomy 4:36

II Chronicles 3:3

Psalms 16:7

Psalms 32:8

Zephaniah 3:7

I Corinthians 2:16

Matthew 13:52

II Timothy 2:25

Philippians 4:12

Other words to study in Proverbs:

4. Prudence (Prov. 1:4)
5. Wise man (Prov. 1:5, 6)
6. Hear (Prov. 1:5, 33)
7. Learning (Prov. 1:5)
8. Fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7, 29)
9. Knowledge (Prov. 1:7, 22, 29; 2:5, 6)
10. Teaching (Prov. 1:8)
11. Sinner (Prov. 1:10)
12. Sheol (Prov. 1:12)
13. Wealth (Prov. 1:13)
14. Path (Prov. 1:15; 2:8, 15, 18, 19)
15. Way (Prov. 1:31; 2:8)
16. Fools (Prov. 1:22, 32)
17. Spirit (Prov. 1:23)
18. Reproof (Prov. 1:30)
19. Receive (Prov. 2:1)
20. Commandments (Prov. 2:1)
21. Heart (Prov. 2:1)
22. Law (Prov. 1:8)
23. etc.

Exercises:

1. What other key words might be added to this list for us to study?

2. Try to memorize at least one verse in Proverbs every week of this study, remembering the reference with each verses. Review, review, review.

