

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

YOU AND YOUR PROBLEMS “The Simple, The Scoffer, The Fool, The Wise” *Proverbs 1*

Christians are often criticized for being unrealistic. We’re the ones who tend to focus more attention on the positive side of life than the negative... the hope of tomorrow instead of the pain of today. Perhaps we are guilty of the charge.

This series of Biblical studies helps put things back into proper perspective. It openly admits that we are not immune to many of the same battles that everyone else faces. Problems like anger, depression, inferiority, loneliness, resentment, and other practical difficulties hassle the people of God and therefore need to be addressed.

We are not different because we are free of problems, but because we have a power within us that the world cannot claim, which enables us to face the problems which come our way. Hopefully, you will find both realism and encouragement in each of these studies that turn to the Scriptures for counsel which never fails.

In an effort to find a painless, problem free life, men and women have flocked to teachers who have told them, “Do this and your life will be made easy... more tolerable.” People have made many a man rich by purchasing his potions and gizmos advertised to cure every conceivable malady... and then some. ***“Medicine man” theology tends to crop up frequently around the Body of Christ these days, claiming, “Come to Him and your problems will vanish... your life will become peaceful.” Such teaching is faulty.*** To buy such thought, one has to obliterate the story of Job and the writing of both Peter and John – not to mention the perspective Christ Himself expressed. Problems are inescapable for the human being stricken by his sin nature (none exempt). Those crossing by faith into Christ’s family are met by One who doesn’t remove their problems, but instead uses them to stimulate growth and maturity. He gives them the ability to cope – to face their struggles with a strength surpassing their own. This series will help us zero in on some of those concerns that at some time affect us all.

“‘Medicine man’ theology tends to crop up frequently around the Body of Christ these days, claiming, ‘Come to Him and your problems will vanish... your life will become peaceful.’ Such teaching is faulty.” –Dr. Charles Swindoll

1. **What do you think Dr. Swindoll means by “Medicine Man” Theology? Give examples. I think that Dr. Swindoll is talking about the present day preaching that has been popularized**

by the “Prosperity Preachers” who boldly, though falsely, proclaim that if you just have enough faith you will be rich, blessed, never get sick, never have problems and if you don’t have these things it is because you don’t have enough faith. Or the “Name-it-claim-it Preacher” who teaches that essentially all you have to do is name what you want and by faith claim it and you will have what you name and never have any problems. Or the formulaic preachers who routinely preach the Bible as if it lays out a magic formula for success and all you have to do is follow the formula and you will never have any problems.

2. **What do you think Dr. Swindoll means by the entire quote/statement above?** *I think that Dr. Swindoll is saying that the modern idea that Christian never have problems and that becoming a Christian will bring and end to all troubles in this life is unbiblical... unscriptural and false.*
3. **Do you agree or disagree with the quote/statement? Why?** *I agree with this the statement that Dr. Swindoll makes. I believe that it is scriptural that it rains on the “just” and the “unjust”... that everyone has problems and that Christians are not immune to problems in this life.*

I. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Four clarify statements set the stage for this study. Review them intermittently (recurrently) throughout this study.

4 Clarify Statements:

1. **It is incorrect to think that because one is a Christian, all his problems will be solved.**
2. **It is incorrect to say that all problems are discussed in the Bible.**
3. **It is incorrect to believe that having a problem means one is unspiritual.**
4. **It is incorrect to assume that being exposed to Bible teaching automatically solves problems.**

Perspective: (“¹¹ We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.” -Hebrews 5:11-14) ***Maturity results when one practices what he has learned. Such practice trains the senses to discern good and evil. In the presence of irritation, temptation, or stress, we are to apply those principles which we have absorbed both from personal study and public instruction. In the experience of application we become wise.***

II. STATEMENTS CONCERNING PROVERBS (Proverbs 1:2-4)

The word “Proverb” means “to be like,” thus Proverbs is a book of comparisons between common, concrete images and life’s most profound truths. Proverbs are simple, moral statements (or illustrations) that highlight and teach fundamental realities about life.

Solomon wrote the book. A son of David, raised with a rich heritage, he was a man of vast experience; he was also king of Israel. Not only was he the wealthiest man to ever have lived, but according to the Bible he was also the wisest. Still, he was a man of unsolved problems. However, Solomon makes four statements regarding his proverbs' usefulness. Listen to it in Proverbs 1:1-4;

¹The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: ² for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; ³ for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; ⁴ for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—“ – Proverbs 1:1-4

The Usefulness of Proverbs in 4 Statements:

1. **“To know wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:2)** – Wisdom is the application of truth to experience; looking at life from God’s point of view.
2. **“To discern the saying of understanding” (Proverbs 1:2)** – Understanding is responding to life from God’s viewpoint. Whereas wisdom is an action, understanding is a reaction. Understanding is the way that you respond to those things which life brings your way.
3. **“To receive instruction in wise behavior” (Proverbs 1:3)** – In other words, doing what is right, and just, and fair
4. **“To give prudence to the naïve, to the youth knowledge and discretion” (Proverbs 1:4)** – Why is it so important for youth to have knowledge and discretion? Because the decisions we make when we are young will affect us the rest of our lives.

III. A GENERAL OBSERVATION ABOUT WISDOM (Proverbs 1:20-33)

Wisdom is personified as an individual who “... shouts in the street... lifts her voice in the square... cries out... utters her saying” (Proverbs 1:20-21). From Solomon’s description we learn the following.

²⁰ Out in the open wisdom calls aloud, she raises her voice in the public square; ²¹ on top of the wall she cries out, at the city gate she makes her speech: ²² ‘How long will you who are simple love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? ²³ Repent at my rebuke! Then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings. ²⁴ But since you refuse to listen when I call and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand, ²⁵ since you disregard all my advice and do not accept my rebuke, ²⁶ I in turn will laugh when disaster strikes you; I will mock when calamity overtakes you — ²⁷ when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you. ²⁸ “Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me, ²⁹ since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD. ³⁰ Since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, ³¹ they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes. ³² For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; ³³ but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm.” – Proverbs 1:20-33

4 Observations About Wisdom:

1. **Wisdom is available to all (Proverbs 1:20-21, 23)** – *“²⁰ Out in the open wisdom calls aloud, she raises her voice in the public square; ²¹ on top of the wall she cries out, at the city gate she makes her speech:... ²³ Repent at my rebuke! Then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings.”*
2. **Wisdom can be spurned (Proverbs 1:24-25)** – *“²⁴ But since you refuse to listen when I call and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand, ²⁵ since you disregard all my advice and do not accept my rebuke...”*
3. **Wisdom spurned bears bitter results (Proverbs 1:26-32)** – *“²⁶ I in turn will laugh when disaster strikes you; I will mock when calamity overtakes you — ²⁷ when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you. ²⁸ ‘Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me, ²⁹ since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD. ³⁰ Since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, ³¹ they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes. ³² For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them;”*
4. **Wisdom applied brings great rewards (Proverbs 1:33)** – *“³³ but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm.”*

IV. A PROFILE OF THOSE SPURNING WISDOM (Proverbs 1:22)

In contrast to the wise man are three types of men who, though similar, reject wisdom to differing extents.

“²² ‘How long will you who are simple love your simple ways? How long will mockers (scoffers) delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge?’” – Proverbs 1:22

3 Types of Men Who Reject Wisdom:

1. **The Simple** – The term used in the text has been translated as “naïve.” In Hebrew the word simple means “to be open to deception, to be easily misled.” In this noun form, it frequently refers to a door that is wide open. The simple man, loving his simplicity, lacks any type of meaningful discernment. This man lacks both knowledge and insight where the basic issues of the Christian life are concerned.
2. **The Scoffer** – He differs from the simple person in that he’s a bit more hard-core. He is not necessarily lost, but he has a nature that scoffs. The term used means “to turn aside, to mock, to reject with vigorous contempt, to refuse, to show disdain, to be disgusted.” This man may have knowledge, but actively refuses or resists application of that knowledge.
3. **The Fool** – He basically stupid, dull. He reasons wrongly. He thinks he can exist well without God and apart from scriptural principles. The fool is characterized by wickedness and even brags about it.

V. A GLIMPSE OF THE WISE MAN

1. **He hears... listens (Proverbs 13:1, 15:31, 21:11)**

- Proverbs 13:1 – *“A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a mocker does not respond to rebukes.”*
- Proverbs 15:31 – *“Whoever heeds life-giving correction will be at home among the wise.”*
- Proverbs 21:11 – *“When a mocker is punished, the simple gain wisdom; by paying attention to the wise they get knowledge.”*

2. He increases his learning (Proverbs 4:5-7, 10:14)

- Proverbs 4:5-7 – *“⁵ Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them. ⁶ Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. ⁷ The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.”*
- Proverbs 10:14 – *“The wise store up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool invites ruin.”*

3. He pays attention to wise counsel (Proverbs 9:8, 12:15)

- Proverbs 9:8 – *“Do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you; rebuke the wise and they will love you.”*
- Proverbs 12:15 – *“The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.”*

4. He anxiously seeks out counsel (Proverbs 4:13, 8:33)

- Proverbs 4:13 – *“Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.”*
- Proverbs 8:33 – *“Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not disregard it.”*