

PSALMS PROVERBS & PARABLES



The Way of Wisdom

Proverbs 1:7

Main Idea

Being in Awe of the Covenant Lord is the foundation to wisdom.

Overview

Apologetic Thought: The answers to “Why” questions eventually have to ascribe value...and values are not often thought through because they have to be tied to a universal truth that is grounded in something or a someone that they may or may not believe in. As Christians...all values (right/wrong, good/bad, wise/unwise) are grounded in the character of God

I. The FEAR of the Lord is the Beginning of Knowledge

- The word “Fear” means to be in awe
 - We see this word used in Exodus 20.20
 - The words prior to this one in vss. 18-19 are not the same word as used in Proverbs
 - The Lord has us to be in Awe of His Person as a Holy God, not only what He is capable of

II. The fear of THE LORD is the Beginning of Knowledge

- The “the” here is important as it tells us there is an awe to one particular Lord
- The “LORD” used here is the Covenant Holy Name of God: Yahweh
 - This tells us that the Awe is directed to a particular God who has acted in a particular way in history and demands a particular life
 - Fear or Awe of This LORD who has acted in this way is the one to whom we find knowledge or wisdom

III. The fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE

- Beginning here does not mean that it is something you graduate from
 - Beginning has in view a foundation or a basis by which everything is based upon
 - The concrete slab to a house is the “beginning” or foundation to a wise house
- Knowledge here is not a collection of facts
 - Knowledge has an intimacy of the object of the knowledge in view
 - Recall how Adam “knew” his wife and they bore a son: Genesis 4.1
 - In this way an intimate awe of the Lord is what is knowledge:
 - Which is why we could say the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom

Questions

Discussion Starter: *When you hear the word “wisdom” who and what do you tend to think of? How does that relate to how Proverbs’ understanding of Wisdom?*

1. Read Proverbs 1:1-7. What purposes for Proverbs do you see in verses 1-6?
2. 1:7 states the theme of the book. How do people display the “fear of the Lord” in the following passages: Exodus 20:18-21; Psalm 112:1, 128:1?
3. In light of these cross-references, how would you define what it means to have “the fear of the Lord”?
4. Discuss specific ways we are often more tempted to be in “awe” or “fear” of man than we are God? Why do you think this is the case, and what is the “remedy”?
5. Why it is important to understand it’s the fear of “the LORD” and not just any god? What bearing does this have in seeking true knowledge?
6. Describe how an awe of the Covenant Lord serves as a basis to build all knowledge/wisdom.
7. What is meant by “beginning” of knowledge?
8. What is meant by “knowledge” and “wisdom” here?
9. Read Proverbs 1:7 (again). Notice the second half of the verse. According to this verse what is the definition of a “fool”? What does this tell you about the importance of seeking wisdom and instruction? How does community play a role in your seeking that wisdom and instruction?

Accountability Question: *What are ways you are striving or not striving to grow in knowledge/wisdom?*