

Divine Truths for Daily Living from Proverbs Three Sermon Outlines

Reuben Ihlenfeldt *

* *Pastor Reuben Ihlenfeldt is the pastor of Bethany-Emmanuel Baptist Church in King William's Town, South Africa and a former president of the Baptist Union of South Africa.*

Editor's Introduction: Outlines for Proverbs

The book of Proverbs should not be neglected in a regular diet of preaching and teaching in the local church. Yet it often presents difficulties for the Christian preacher and teacher. There are two difficulties in particular: how to organise a message from Proverbs and how to avoid pure moralistic preaching or teaching which promotes works righteousness.

There are many different ways to organise messages based upon Proverbs, and there are good tools to help in this regard. Certain commentaries which are expository-based will be very helpful in organising Proverbs for teaching purposes. For example, David Hubbard's commentary, originally part of the Word Communicator's Commentary series, now in the Mastering the Old Testament series, is very useful in this regard.¹ But there are others. Many can be downloaded for free, yet the reader is cautioned to use discernment. In that regard, anyone who wants to wrestle with the nature of properly interpreting Proverbs should refer to the article by Greg Parson's, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming the Book of Proverbs", which can be downloaded from the internet for free.² Parson helps us to see the rules we must follow in interpreting this Old Testament book for teaching purposes.

In an effort to help preachers and student preachers think about how to organise and make outlines for preaching from Proverbs, we have included three sample sermon outlines from Pastor Reuben Ihlenfeldt of Bethany-Emmanuel Baptist Church in King William's Town, South Africa. Think about his sermon outlines or skeletons and note how he has organised Proverbs by theme. Perhaps you can use these outlines in your preaching or in teaching a Bible class somewhere. As you do so, keep asking, "How does

¹ David Hubbard, *Proverbs*. Word Communicator's Commentary series, gen ed. Lloyd Ogilvie. (Dallas: Word, 1989). Reprinted in the Mastering the Old Testament series, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

² Greg Parson, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming the Book of Proverbs", *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1993, <https://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/tedhildebrandt/otresources/20-proverbs/text/articles/parsons-provguidelines-bs.pdf>.

this relate to being in Christ?” and “What is distinctive here about the Christian’s spiritual life?”

On a personal note, I have attempted through the years to preach from Proverbs each January and to also read a chapter from Proverbs with my family each day in January (for the 31 days equal the 31 chapters). There is an old English proverb that says, “Solomon made a Book of Proverbs but a Book of Proverbs won’t make a Solomon”. Reading Proverbs is no guarantee of blessing; we need the blessing and ministry of the Holy Spirit as we engage with this book.

Each reference in Pastor Reuben Ihlenfeldt’s sermon outlines which does not include the name of the book of the Bible (only the chapter number and verse number) is from Proverbs. All other books of Scripture are identified by name. May the Lord bless you as you preach and teach from Proverbs.

Prayer:

“Thank you, our Father, for this very practical book and for the admonition it gives our hearts to remember that life can never be understood, can never be handled, can never make sense until we approach it with trust in you and remember that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We thank you in Christ’s name. Amen.

- Ray C. Stedman

#1. Family Matters

I. Why Raising Godly Children Is Important

1. Parental Pride and Joy!!

- Wise son, glad father; stupid son, sad mother. (10:1 MSG)
- Sensible children bring joy to their father; foolish children despise their mother. (15:20 NLT)
- To have a fool for a son brings grief; there is no joy for the father of a fool. (17:21 NIV)
- A surly, stupid child is sheer pain to a father, a bitter pill for a mother to swallow. (17:25 MSG)
- Grandchildren are the crowning glory of the aged; parents are the pride of their children. (17:6 NLT)
- A foolish child is a calamity to a father; a nagging wife annoys like a constant dripping. (19:13 NLT)
- Dear child, if you become wise, I'll be one happy parent. (23:15 MSG)

2. Stable Society

- Children who mistreat their father or chase away their mother are a public disgrace and an embarrassment. (19:26 NLT)
- My child, how happy I will be if you turn out to be wise! Then I will be able to answer my critics. (27:11 NLT)
- The father of godly children has cause for joy. What a pleasure it is to have wise children. (23:24 NLT)

II. Attributes of Godly Children

1. Hard Working

- A wise youth works hard all summer; a youth who sleeps away the hour of opportunity brings shame. (10:5 NLT)

2. Obedience

- Intelligent children listen to their parents; foolish children do their own thing. (13:1 MSG)
- He who keeps the law is a discerning son, but a companion of gluttons disgraces his father. (28:7 NIV)

3. Right Conduct

- Even children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure and right. (20:11 NLT)

III. Benefits of Having Godly Parents

1. Freedom with Boundaries

- You can be sure that evil people will be punished, but the children of the godly will go free. (11:21 NLT)
- The wicked perish and are gone, but the children of the godly stand firm. (12:7 NLT)

2. A Godly Inheritance

- A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous. (13:22 NIV)
- God-loyal people, living honest lives, make it much easier for their children. (20:7 MSG)

IV. Developing Godly Children

1. Discipline

- If you refuse to discipline your children, it proves you don't love them; if you love your children, you will be prompt to discipline them. (13:24 NLT)
- Discipline your children while you still have the chance; indulging them destroys them. (19:18 MSG)
- Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him. (22:15 NIV)
- Don't fail to correct your children. They won't die if you spank them. (23:13 NLT)
- The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother. (29:15 NIV)
- Discipline your children; you'll be glad you did-- they'll turn out delightful to live with. (29:17 MSG)

2. Direction

- Listen, my son, and be wise, and keep your heart on the right path. (23:19 NIV)
- Teach your children to choose the right path, and when they are older, they will remain upon it. (22:6 NLT)
- If you stop listening to instruction, my child, you have turned your back on knowledge. (19:27 NLT)
- A wise servant takes charge of an unruly child and is honored as one of the family. (17:2 MSG)
- Eat honey, my son, for it is good; honey from the comb is sweet to your taste. (24:13 NIV)

3. Discipleship

- The Fear-of-GOD builds up confidence, and makes a world safe for your children. (14:26 MSG)
- My son, fear Jehovah and the king; and do not fellowship with those who are given to change. (24:21 MKJV)

4. Doing

- Dear child, I want your full attention; please do what I show you. (23:26 MSG)

Conclusion: (Jesus) The Son That Made All The Difference

The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, the prophecy: The man spoke to Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal, saying, Surely I am more like an animal than any man, and do not have the understanding of a man. I have not learned wisdom, nor the knowledge of the holy. Who has gone up to Heaven and has come down? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in His garments? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name? Surely you know. Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. (30:1-5 MKJV)

#2. The Kind of Person that Makes God “Mad”

Proverbs 6:12-19

- ¹² *A scoundrel and a villain,
who goes about with a corrupt mouth,*
- ¹³ *who winks with his eye,
signals with his feet
and motions with his fingers,*
- ¹⁴ *who plots evil with deceit in his heart –
he always stirs up dissension.*
- ¹⁵ *Therefore disaster will overtake him in an instant;
he will suddenly be destroyed – without remedy.*
- ¹⁶ *There are six things the LORD hates,
seven that are detestable to him:*

- ¹⁷ *haughty eyes,
a lying tongue,
hands that shed innocent blood,*
- ¹⁸ *a heart that devises wicked schemes,
feet that are quick to rush into evil,*
- ¹⁹ *a false witness who pours out lies
and a man who stirs up dissension.*

(Note below the parallels in the New Testament Gospels.)

I. The Person with a “Holier Than Thou” Look

- Haughty eyes – Matt. 7:1-6

II. The Person Whose Word Cannot Be Trusted

- Their talk is cheap – Matt. 5:33-37

III. The Person Who Does Not Care Who They Crush on Their Way to the Top

- Hands that shed innocent blood – Matt. 5:21-26

IV. The Person Who Plots Evil

- A heart that devises wicked schemes – Matt. 7:13-27.

V. The Person Who Runs After the Person Who Plots Evil

- Feet that are quick to rush into evil – Matt. 7:13-27

VI. The Premeditated Liar

- A false witness who pours out lies – Matt. 5:33-37

VII. The Stirrer

- A Man who stirs up dissension among brothers – Matt. 5:25-32, 43-48

Conclusion: Just Like Judas

- #1 Matt 26:13-16
- #2 Matt. 26:25
- #3 Matt. 26:47
- #4 John 13:26
- #5 John 13:27
- #6 Luke 22:4
- #7 John 12:4-6

#3. How to Stop Making a Fool of Yourself

I. The Characteristics of the Fool

1. Immoral

- The words of the godly are like sterling silver; the heart of a fool is worthless. (10:20 NLT)

2. Insatiable

- Sensible people keep their eyes glued on wisdom, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth. (24:7 NLT)

3. Idiotic

- A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions. (18:2 NIV)
- Wisdom is too much for a fool. When the leaders gather, the fool has nothing to say. (24:7 NLT)

II. The Actions of the Fool

1. Bad Talk

- Wise people treasure knowledge, but the babbling of a fool invites trouble. (10:14 NLT)
- He who hides hatred with lying lips, and he who speaks a slander, is a fool. (10:18 MKJV)
- The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly. (15:2 NIV)
- A fool's mouth is his undoing, and his lips are a snare to his soul. (18:7 NIV)

2. Bad Walk

- Doing wrong is fun for a fool, while wise conduct is a pleasure to the wise. (10:23 NLT)
- A fool spurns his father's discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence. (15:5 NIV)

III. How to Treat a Fool

1. Don't Get into an Argument

- A quiet rebuke to a person of good sense does more than a whack on the head of a fool. (17:10 MSG)
- It is safer to meet a bear robbed of her cubs than to confront a fool caught in folly. (17:12 NLT)

- The words of a fool start fights; do him a favour and gag him. (18:6 MSG)
- Do not answer a fool according to his foolishness, lest you also be like him. (26:4 MKJV)
- Answer a fool in simple terms so he doesn't get a swelled head. (26:5 MSG)

2. Don't Try to Change a Fool

- It is senseless to pay tuition to educate a fool who has no heart for wisdom. (17:16 NLT)
- Putting a fool in a place of honour is like setting a mud brick on a marble column. (26:8 MSG)
- Pound on a fool all you like-- you can't pound out foolishness. (27:22 MSG)

3. Don't Hire a Fool

- Do not speak in the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words. (23:9 MKJV)
- Hire a fool or a drunk and you shoot yourself in the foot. (26:10 MSG)
- Trusting a fool to convey a message is as foolish as cutting off one's feet or drinking poison! (26:6 NLT)

IV. Avoiding Foolish Ways

1. Be Willing to Learn from Others

- The wise in heart accept commands, but a chattering fool comes to ruin. (10:8 NIV)
- The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who listens to advice is wise. (12:15 MKJV)
- A wise person is hungry for truth, while the fool feeds on trash. (15:14 NLT)

2. Control Your Temper

- A fool is quick-tempered, but a wise person stays calm when insulted. (12:16 NLT)
- A wise man fears the LORD and shuns evil, but a fool is hot-headed and reckless. (14:16 NIV)

3. Learn from Your Mistakes

- As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly. (26:11 NIV)

Conclusion: People Worse Than a Fool

Do you see a man wise in his own eyes?

There is more hope for a fool than for him. (26:12 NIV)

*He who trusts in himself is a fool,
but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe. (28:26 NIV)*