Proverbs 1: To know wisdom and instruction now, to discern the sayings of understanding; to receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice, equity.

The book of Proverbs is entitled “The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel” and there is no real reason to question his authorship. He was known for his great wisdom and proverbs that he wrote. In fact, 1 Kings 4:32 said that **he spoke 3,000 proverbs**. 1 Kings 4:34 stated, “***Men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.***”

At least the first few chapters of Proverbs were written to his son. It would be natural for such a man to pass his wisdom on to his son and others. Much like his own father ***David***, Solomon initially had a deep love for God. He knew that his son’s life would be satisfying and happy if he would love the Lord God and follow His instructions.

Proverbs 1: To Know Wisdom And Instruction Now

In verse 2 and 3, Solomon gave the purpose for Proverbs 1 and really the entire book when he wrote, “To know wisdom and instruction, to discern the sayings of understanding; to receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice and equity…” Wisdom means to apply knowledge skillfully. Knowledge, in this case, involves the will, the teaching, and the principles of God.

Every day, a person will have to make hundreds of decisions. Some will be small and routine, and others may be of greater importance. But, for a person to be able to use God's teachings, he/she must be ready to accept and obey God's will. It means to make a deliberate change in that person's life and submit to the Lord God's Will.

In verse 7, Solomon wrote, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction." This passage is really the cornerstone of faith in both the Old and New Testament times. The word "fear" can have many meanings. This can refer to an almost paralyzing terror of something or someone.

It can mean a fearful dread of some terrible event that is about to happen. Or It may be the numbing sense of fear after receiving a diagnosis of cancer or some other serious illness. "Fear" can mean so many things.

Proverbs 1: To Know Wisdom And Instruction Now

But when considering God, “fear” in verse 7 has a very special meaning. God is the Creator, Eternal, the Living God, all Perfect, and Holy. He is all powerful, all knowing, and His presence fills His Creation. But, for a Christian, God can also be addressed as Father. When a person obeys the Gospel, the Good News, that person is adopted into God’s family. That family is the Church, or the Body, of

Christ.

God is the perfect Father in all respects. He loves His children, and He has provided instruction on what He expects in His inspired Word – the Bible. That Word includes the promises of help in time of need, and the hope of eternal life.

But it also includes warning of judgment for those that reject His offer, or fall away. Therefore, the “fear”, that a Christian feel should be tied to a deep sense of reverence and gratitude for God’s love, His grace, and His mercy.

Even in the Old Testament, before the “mystery of the ages” was revealed, God promised blessings on His people when they submitted and obeyed His will. At the same time, the Old Testament writings were very clear that rebellion and rejection would be punished.

Advertisements
Proverbs 1: To Know Wisdom And Instruction Now

The second half of verse 7 states, “Fools despise wisdom and instruction.” Very small children must be watched closely because they do not understand or recognize many of the hazards of life. As they get older, they can make more decisions on their own, but too often they

become overconfident in their abilities and do not want to listen to their parents and other “wiser” heads.

They make mistakes and learn the lessons of life from those mistakes. All of this involves the process of growing up or maturing to adulthood.

Once a person matures to the point where he/she is expected to make mature decisions, then the true moral character of that person becomes evident. That person may develop into a man, or woman, who has integrity, is responsible, honest, and dependable.

It could be said that such a person demonstrates wisdom. Verse 5 states, “A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel…”

But there are always those people that will refuse to walk the path of righteousness. They will spend more time trying to avoid their responsibilities than to do what is right. They seem to be eager to go into “harm’s way” for the thrill. When their actions lead to unpleasant consequences, it is never their fault.

Proverbs 1: To Know Wisdom And Instruction Now

Verses 29-32 describe their fate, *"Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would not accept my counsel, they spurned all my reproof. So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way and be satiated with their own devices. For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them."*

There is another important word in verse 7. That word is "beginning". "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge…" Obeying and serving God is a process. It is not something that a person receives and keeps with no other effort. When Solomon wrote these words in Proverbs, it is apparent that his love and reverence for the Lord God was strong.

Yet, later in his life, he was not faithful. ***1 Kings 11*** describes Solomon's later life, "1. Now King Solomon loved many foreign women…… 4. For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods…. 6. Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not follow the Lord fully, as David his father."

Proverbs 1: To Know Wisdom And Instruction Now

God had been pleased with the younger Solomon's request for the wisdom to rule wisely, but Solomon did not continue to follow the Lord's will. Apparently, his wisdom turned to pride, and he ignored wisdom and instruction and became the fool he warned about in Proverbs 1:7.

But for those that are faithful, that fear and love the Lord, and serve Him, there is a promise in verse 33, “But he who listens to me (that being wisdom) shall live securely and will be at ease from the dread of evil.” ***God’s peace and His offer of salvation is always conditional***.