

Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

PRAIRIE VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Bulletin Articles from August 14, 2011

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Scripture of the Week



1 Kings 3:7-9

"Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted. So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

When Solomon ascended the throne of his father David, and was appointed king over Israel, he was but a young man of probably no more than twenty years of age. After he had ruled for a short time in Jerusalem, Solomon went to the city of Gibeon to offer sacrifices to God because the brazen altar and tabernacle were located there. The Lord appeared to him in a dream while he was in Gibeon and said, "Ask *what you wish Me to give to you*" (verse 5). As remarkable as the Lord's offering to the young king was, even more remarkable was Solomon's response. Of all the things he could have asked for, he chose an understanding heart in order to lead God's people with wisdom and justice. You can't help but be im-

pressed by the humility and wisdom the young man already possessed as demonstrated by his exceptional request. One thing is for sure—God was certainly impressed by Solomon's good heart. He told Solomon that because he asked for discernment to understand justice, He would give him that and much more (verse 11). God granted Solomon wisdom that was equaled by no one, and He promised him riches and honor such as no other king possessed (verses 12-13). Solomon later wrote, "*How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver*" (Proverbs 16:16). No truer words have ever been written. All the riches in the world won't profit a man as well as a wise and discerning heart.

The Wisest Fool

God endowed Solomon with a heart of unparalleled discernment in order to rule over His people with wisdom and justice, and Solomon's achievements as king were nothing less than astounding. Under his rule, the borders of Israel reached their greatest extent (1 Kings 4:21). Israel enjoyed peace and prosperity like it never had before and never would again. "*Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon*" (1 Kings 4:25). "*The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland*" (1 Kings 10:27). These

were Israel's glory days, and they existed only because a humble man sought to serve his God and his people with wisdom, righteousness and justice. Unfortunately, even the wisest people on earth aren't immune to sin's temptation and the seduction of foolishness. All the wisdom in the world won't do a man a bit of good if he chooses not to use it, and so it was with Solomon. He hardened his heart to God's commandments, and chose the path of folly, and he and Israel suffered greatly for it. Solomon's flaws were many, but his most glaring weakness appeared to be his fondness for women. He multiplied wives for himself in direct violation of God's

commandment in Deuteronomy 17:17. 1 Kings 11:4-5 says that Solomon had 700 foreign wives who turned his heart away from the Lord to serve their false gods. As a result, the kingdom was ripped apart (1 Kings 11:11-13), God's people suffered greatly, and so did the once wise king. Solomon's story teaches us to beware our weaknesses! If Solomon could be overpowered by lust and sinfulness so can we! We usually associate wisdom with old age, but Solomon was wise in his youth and grew foolish in his golden years. Don't assume we grow wiser as we grow older. We must be very careful to walk in the ways of the Lord all the days of our lives.

Please Come Visit Us At...

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Times of Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study.....9:30

Sunday Morning Worship Service.....10:30

Sunday Evening Worship Service.....6:30

Wednesday Evening Bible Study.....7:30



The Proverbs of Solomon

The biblical book of Proverbs begins: “*The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel.*” This book is a form of writing known as “Wisdom Literature”. It is only fitting that the wisest man in the world, by the Bible’s definition of wisdom, should be the author of the inspired book most associated with wisdom. It is true that Solomon departed from wisdom’s path in his older years, but his wise counsel is no less true than had he heeded it himself all the days of his life. The wise advice we give others is still profitable and true, even if we choose not to follow it ourselves. The design of the book of Proverbs is to instruct all people, but especially God’s people, in the ways of wisdom. Much of the book contrasts the ways of the wise and the ways of the foolish. But we should know, as we read

these sage bits of advice, that God equates wisdom with righteousness and foolishness with sinfulness. God isn’t merely teaching us how to be shrewd in a worldly sense, but wise in a godly sense. Proverbs 9:10 says, “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*” No matter how smart and clever and shrewd a person might be, if he does not fear the Lord he is merely an intelligent fool. The Hebrew word for “proverb” means “a comparison,” and many proverbs show the similarities between two things that may not appear to be similar on the surface. Proverbs 12:4 says “*An excellent wife is the crown of her husband.*” When we stop and contemplate the similarities between a good wife and a kingly crown, we’ll see several, and they are all lovely. Proverbs are skillfully crafted phrases de-

signed to impress God’s will upon our minds. Generally speaking, a proverb is a concise, meaningful statement recognized as a basic truth or accepted rule of conduct. Having said that, as we read these truisms, we must understand that they are largely generalizations and not always true one hundred percent of the time. Proverbs 11:8 says “*The righteous is delivered from trouble.*” This doesn’t imply that a righteous person will never have a problem in his life. But, more times than not, when we behave wisely and righteously we will avoid trouble. One of the many wonders of Proverbs is that we can go to just a single verse and extract a golden nugget of wisdom that will instantly help enhance our walk with the Lord, without having to learn of the historical or textual context first.

OUR GOSPEL MEETING WITH GERRY SANDUSKY

If you missed any of the lessons from our Gospel meeting of August 15-17, they are posted on our website at www.pvchurchofchrist.com. Click the tab that indicates that meeting, and you can either “left click” the “play” button and listen to the sermon from your computer, or you can “right click” and save that sermon to file and listen to it elsewhere. Thanks to everyone who attended and prayed for our special meeting.