

Profiting from Proverbs

Ponder: Everyone needs help.

Scripture: “To give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion – a wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel” (Proverbs 1:4-5, NKJV).

The first two classes of people to whom Solomon addressed his proverbs are no surprise. The third might astonish us, but it shouldn't.

When I look in the mirror, I see a man who is just a bit gullible. Solomon used the term “simple.” Another word for that is naive. I'm harder to fool than I used to be – over six decades of living has cured some of the problem. But oftentimes I still need a good dose of prudence (shrewdness), and Solomon said that's why he wrote his proverbs. I am thankful that he wrote them, and that King Hezekiah's men and others compiled them (see Proverbs 25:1). I'm also thankful for other wise men like Agur (30:1) and Lemuel (31:1) whose words are included in the book of Proverbs.

Who else profits from Proverbs? The young! What will the young gain from Proverbs? Solomon said they will acquire knowledge and discretion. Some (not all) young folks are know-it-alls. (Yes, older people may have that mindset too, but that's another subject for another time.) They may not realize how lacking in knowledge they are until they come face-to-face with the harsh realities of life. Proverbs deals largely with such situations.

Head-knowledge, however, must be used with discretion in order to serve us well. Memorizing facts from the encyclopedia accomplishes little unless you have the ability to use those facts appropriately in day-to-day living. Proverbs helps us with that, and whether we are young or old, we ought to accept that help.

Even if you're already wise, you still need the book of Proverbs. Truly wise people know that they still have room to grow. They are happy to benefit from additional learning, and they eagerly attain (literally “buy”) wise counsel.

Whether you are young or old, naive or shrewd, wise or foolish, I commend to you the great book of Proverbs. Everyone, including you and including me, needs the help it offers. Let's profit from Proverbs!

Song: “How Shall The Young Secure Their Hearts?”

Prayer: “All-wise Heavenly Father, we thank You for preserving the marvelous wisdom contained in the book of Proverbs. We are blessed beyond measure to have such easy access to all of Your holy word. May we diligently read and heed. In Jesus' name, Amen.