

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Topical studies in Proverbs– *Wisdom & Faithfulness in Relationships*

The Bible & Human Identity

- The biblical worldview understands our full sense of identity to be intimately intertwined with a matrix of essential relationships.
- The fundamental relationship of every human individual is with his or her Creator. We are all “creatures of our God and King.”
- We are most fully who we are not in isolation but in our relationships with God, parents & family, spouse, children, friends, neighbors, community, & nation.
- The basis of stability and flourishing in all human relationships are love (Hebrew – *chesed*) and faithfulness (Hebrew – *emeth*) (Proverbs 3:3-4; 14:22; 16:2; 19:22; 20:28).

Notes & Questions:

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God

- The book of Proverbs presents God as “Yahweh” (the LORD), the covenant God of Israel, who is Maker (3:19; 22:2) and Judge (5:21; 16:2; 15:3; 21:2) of all; who hates evil & punishes the wicked (3:32; 6:16-19; 11:1, 20; 12:22; 15:8-9) & rewards the righteous (10:3, 22, 27; 12:2).
- Our proper relationship to the Lord is one of fear (9:10; 14:16, 26; 15:33; 19:23; 28:14), trust (16:20; 22:19), and submission to the Lord (3:5-6, 11-12; 16:3).

Notes & Questions:

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Parents

- The wisdom in Proverbs regarding our relationship to our parents expresses much of the practical meaning of God's command to "honor your father and mother," the fifth commandment (Ex. 19:12).
- As children and youth, we should obey our mothers & fathers and heed their instruction & discipline (1:8; 3:1-2; 4:1-2; 6:20-23; 7:1-3; 13:1).
- As adult children, we should live in a way that brings joy to our parents (10:1; 15:20; 17:21, 25; 29:3).
- We should respect and care for our parents in their old age (11:29; 17:6; 19:26; 20:20; 23:22; 28:24; 30:17).

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Spouse

- A husband should recognize & deeply appreciate that a good wife is a gift from God (12:4; 18:22; 19:14; 31:30-31).
- A wife should seek to support and do well by her husband (31:10-12; 12:4; 19:14).
- A husband must be faithful to his wife (5:15-20).
- A wife should not be disagreeable or quarrelsome (19:13; 21:9, 19; 27:15-16).

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Children

- Children should be loved, nurtured, & provided for (31:15, 21, 27-28).
- Children should be taught, trained, and disciplined by their fathers and mothers (1:8-9; 5:1-2; 6:20-23; 3:11-12; 13:24; 19:18; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 29:15, 17; 30:26). It is essential that children be brought up being instructed in morality, wisdom, and the “discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).

Notes & Questions:

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Friends & Neighbors

- We should be faithful to friends and neighbors (17:17; 18:24; 27:6, 10).
- We have an obligation to act with loyalty, integrity, & honesty toward our friends & neighbors (3:27-29; 24:28-29; 25:18; 26:18-19).
- We should practice kindness & generosity (11:25).
- We should exercise discretion in speech, avoid offense, & not be quarrelsome (16:28; 17:9, 14; 18:19; 20:3).
- Sometimes, we must be cautious in friendship (12:26; 17:18; 22:24-25; 25:17).

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Topical studies in Proverbs– *Wisdom & Faithfulness in Community & Nation Relationships*

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