

Why Should We Teach with the Book of Proverbs?

How many parents realize what a powerful teaching tool they have right in the middle of their Bibles?

Deuteronomy 6 instructs parents, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." We're familiar with the verses, but are we really faithful to diligently teach our children in this way?

The book of Proverbs is one of the greatest resources God has given to help us train our children while we sit in our house, when we walk by the way, when we lie down, and when we get up.

- The proverbs continually address "my son." They are written specifically to young people, and to young men in particular. **They are aimed at children and young people.**
- Proverbs are written to give knowledge and discretion to the immature or naïve, "to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion..." (Proverbs 1:4, NKJV) **Our children are in need of knowledge and discretion.**
- The book of Proverbs contains God-inspired wisdom from Solomon, the world's wisest man, and from other wise men of history. **What better teachers could we give our children?**
- The proverbs are full of word pictures that stir our emotional responses and help us to remember their messages. **What child (or adult) can forget the vivid pictures portrayed in the proverbs?**
- Each proverb is brief and thought-provoking. **A proverb teaches a great deal in a very little bit of time, and leaves us and our children with thoughts to meditate on throughout the day.**
- The proverbs prepare us to avoid or deal with all sorts of people and all sorts of circumstances. They protect us from the fool, the immoral woman, the angry man, the flatterer, and the influence of those who would lead us astray

*“To deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things, from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness...To deliver you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words.” Proverbs 2:12, 13, 16, NKJV). **Do your children need wisdom when dealing with the many different people and situations of life?***

- *The proverbs contain God’s wisdom, and they tell us that His wisdom is **more valuable than silver and gold and rubies.** (“For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.” Proverbs 3:14-15, NKJV) **Can we offer our children any more valuable gift in life than God’s wisdom?***

The book of Proverbs is very conveniently divided into 31 chapters. If you read one chapter each day with your family, you will read the book of Proverbs 12 times each year. If you continue this habit each year it will add up to a lot of hearings of the book for your children! They will become familiar with the wisdom of Proverbs by simply hearing it read so much.

Activities to Help You Teach the Proverbs to Your Children

- *Draw your own Proverbs illustrations. As a family member reads a chapter, allow everyone else to select a proverb, and without telling the others what they have chosen, draw a picture to illustrate it. If necessary, allow extra time to complete the drawings after reading the chapter. Then each person can display his drawing while the rest of the family seeks to identify the selected proverb. Read the chapter again, if needed.*
- *Illustrate a proverb, copy its text onto the drawing, and post it in the house where all can be reminded of its teaching throughout the day.*
- *Dramatize a proverb. Part of the family can act out a proverb while the rest of the family guesses which one it is. You may narrow the selection down to one paragraph, or allow the family to test their knowledge from the entire book of Proverbs.*
- *Set up a scene with Legos, Playmobil, dolls, stuffed animals, or other toys to demonstrate a particular proverb. Have the family guess which proverb is being illustrated.*

- *Write or tell stories to illustrate a principle taught in the Proverbs. This can be a writing assignment for school, a while-you-snuggle bedtime story, or a pastime while traveling in the car. You can make this a game by designating one person to start the story and then allowing each family member to continue the story with their own segment.*
- *Identify examples of the truths of Proverbs as they are illustrated in the historical accounts in the Old Testament.*
- *Read short stories, fables, and books, and discuss what truths from the book of Proverbs are being demonstrated in the plots. Do the same with appropriate movies.*
- *Recite one phrase of a proverb, and see who can complete the proverb.*
- *Name a topic from Proverbs and see who can find or recite a proverb related to it. Make this a contest or race, if desired.*
- *Cross-stitch, carve, paint, or embroider the words of a proverb, and frame it to display in your home.*
- *Play "Who Am I?" Give clues, based on the teaching of Proverbs, about a certain type of person. For example, "I am like a door turning on its hinges," as a clue for the sluggard. Others guess what kind of person you are describing.*

*This material is adapted from **Hidden Treasures**, by Pam Forster, and is available in its complete form from:*

Doorposts, www.doorposts.net/hidden_treasures.asp