

Expectations

What do you expect when you read the Bible? Do you have the same expectation when reading different books of the Bible: The Psalms as compared to Genesis as compared to the gospel accounts? What about The Proverbs?

Unlike many books of the Bible the book of Proverbs announces its purpose within the first several verses. A person might generalize the purpose of Proverbs by describing it as a book of wisdom, but what should a person expect?

Solomon described the expectation for the reader:

To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity.

--Proverbs 1:3

When a person reads a nugget of wisdom in The Proverbs, it is often applied to a specific event in one's life in a kind of 'moment by moment application.' The purpose of the entire book applies to the scope of one's life. The Revised Standard Version accurately suggests this broad purpose:

[That men may] receive instruction in wise dealing....

'Wise behavior' or 'wise dealing' is defined in three areas: *Righteousness, justice, and equity*. Together these describe

the full development of 'wise behavior': conduct in a morally right way, in a legally correct way, and by applying all things rightly, or evenly.

Applying the Proverbs to your life, you can expect to be equipped:

- Morally; not as a moral perfectionist, yet not immoral;
- Legally; not as a legalist following the letter of the law, but law abiding;
- Practically; not being a hypocrite, but applying things properly to yourself and others.

Among all the accusations levied against Jesus, no one ever accused Him of being overly pious or 'holier than thou.' No one accused Jesus of being a morality policeman or a judge. He applied the instruction of God perfectly as a true example of 'wise behavior': Full of *righteousness, justice, and equity*.

Have you ever considered that the Proverbs can equip you to be more like Jesus?

Read Proverbs.

Ponder Proverbs.

Apply Proverbs.

Expect wise dealings.