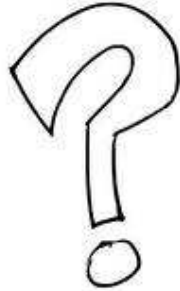


CAN YOU TRUST THE PROVERBS???



While most of the Proverbs make perfect sense and are easily applicable to our lives, there are those which seem to defy reason – some even seem to be an obvious contradiction. How do we make sense of these sayings? How do we deal with these tricky Proverbs? Can we trust the Proverbs?

Q: Aren't the Proverbs just stating the obvious?

Q: Are the Proverbs any different from secular wisdom?

(Poor Richard, Chicken Soup for the Soul, Moral Compass, etc.)

Q: We established that the Proverbs aren't laws. If so, am I sinning if I break them?

→ If not, what difference does it make?

→ When we ignore the Proverbs, we just make our lives HARDER!

Tonight ... we will consider some hard to understand Proverbs. Before we begin our discussion, write down a Proverb or 2 that you find confusing or difficult.

Proverbs 26:4-5 "To Answer or Not To Answer ... is that the question??"

> This proverb is a great example of CONTRADICTION. What are we to do?

> Important to understand: two distinct opposites in such close proximity can't be a MISTAKE.

-- It shows DESIGN, not DISORDER!

Keys to understanding:

1. Are these verses telling us that we should or shouldn't answer the fool?

NO ... instead, they are simply showing the results of EITHER APPROACH!

2. Solomon is demonstrating the FUTILITY of FOOLISHNESS!

> What else does Solomon say about fools in this passage (vv.6-11)?

> What conclusion / interpretation would you make about this passage?

3. Both verses describe have MERIT.

> 2 Timothy 2:23; Matthew 7:6 – How do these verses go along with this passage?

> Can you think of a time when both were true in your life?

Proverbs 27:14 "I Like A Quiet Blessing in the Morning!"

> From a web site blogger: *"I've seen parents do this to wake up their kids. Could you please clarify further? Also I know this verse is an advantage because our first moments when we wake up should be with the Lord.. right?"*

> Possible Meanings (from study Bible notes and Commentaries)

- * Trying to win a neighbor's FAVOR?
- * Being outwardly PIOUS – like the loud-praying Pharisee.
- * Going overboard in blessing someone can be a STUMBLING BLOCK.

> Bailey's Interpretation:

- * 2 Keys: (1) LOUDLY (2) EARLY IN THE AM
- * It's all about TIMING and CONSIDERATION!
 - Ministry at the wrong time and setting is never WELCOMED!
 - Can you think of an example?

Proverbs 31:6-7 "Let the Poor Things Drink their Troubles Away" sayeth the Lord!!

> Is God condoning drunkenness? Is Ephesians 5:18 circumstantial?

> NIV Study note – Uhhh ... there isn't one for these verses??

> Key Points for Good Interpretation:

- * Who gets the beer?
- * Who gets the wine?
- * What is the purpose for this inebriation?
- * What might be a modern equivalent? MORPHINE