

## Session 19 – Actual

As we have studied through the book of Romans, we have encountered doctrine in its first 5 chapters that is meant to settle the issue of your justification once and for all. Paul laid out a legal case to prove that when we trusted Christ as our all-sufficient Savior, we were justified unto eternal life by grace through faith without works of any kind at any time.

Then, as we progressed through the next 3 chapters of Romans, we were introduced to our sanctified standing in Jesus Christ. There we learned that we are sanctified by grace through faith without works, just as we were justified by grace through faith without works. We were equipped with the knowledge that we are “dead to sin” and “alive unto God” and that we no longer have to obey sin. We are warned about the futility of trying to live for God under the law (or any form of it). We learned that only grace has the power to restrain sin and promote righteousness.

Then, in the middle of chapter 8, we were told something for the very first time; that we have been adopted and that now we are going to be treated as the adopted, adult sons that we have been made to be. That turns out to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> component of our sanctification; that we are made to be “sons of God”.

Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, **they are the sons of God.**  
15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but **ye have received the Spirit of adoption**, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Since Paul does not explain our adoption here, but merely informs us of it, we knew that we had to already understand some things about adoption from earlier in the Scripture. Also understanding that God’s intention was to utilize adoption for Israel in their program as well, we recognized 3 things:

1. We were going to have to go back in our Bibles to get a basic understanding about adoption
2. God will utilize adoption in both programs to accomplish His purposes in the earth (with Israel) and in the heavenly places (with the body of Christ)
3. While the basic structure of adoption is the same in both programs, the doctrine for Israel’s adoption is different from the doctrine in our program

We also know that the adoption of Romans 8 (Bible adoption) is not like the adoption of today, but was for the specific reason of educating a son (or daughter) in the father’s business so that the son will one day labor alongside his father in that business. Biblical adoption was not just about having pity on some unfortunate child, but it was about carrying on the family name and the family business through a son or daughter that was willing and eager to do so.

The means by which an earthly father would educate and begin his son's apprenticeship in the business would be conducted personally by the father in a day by day process of instruction and hands-on application of the things learned. The means by which our heavenly Father will educate us and begin our apprenticeship training will also be a day-by-day instruction and hands-on application of the things we learn. But instead of your Father physically manifesting Himself to instruct us, He has given us everything that we need to be educated, trained and equipped to labor with Him in His business in the heavenly places.

In order to accomplish this, He has given us:

- Grace – which makes godly edification (adoption) possible
- Spiritual Fitness – which qualifies us to be adopted sons
- His word – a complete written curriculum of instruction
- His Spirit - to lead us through the curriculum
- Prayer – which provides real, bi-directional communication between us and Him
- Local Assemblies – where the pastor functions as a “father” to guide us through the curriculum (not as a tutor or governor)
- Other Divine Institutions – apprenticeship opportunities to hone and sharpen our skills

Every member of the body of Christ is going to end up in the Father's business. You can choose to participate in that business to the fullest extent or you can participate to a very shallow extent, it's your choice. But that choice will have an impact on your eternal life and that is the reason for the verses that follow in Romans 8.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: <sup>17</sup> And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

The impact of your choice to be educated as a son will be seen in your inheritance. Every “child of God” will have an inheritance, but not every child of God has the same inheritance. What you will be doing in the heavenly places and your eternal position in accordance with that position will be determined by the degree to which you invest yourself in your education as an adopted son.

That is the reason why verse 16 uses the term “children of God” and not “sons of God.” Verse 17 tells you that if you are a “child of God” then you are an heir; that is, you have an inheritance that will come from God, your heavenly Father. Therefore, every member of the body of Christ has an inheritance. They are ‘children of God’ whether they value their adoption as sons or not and, as such, they are “heirs of God” even if they reject their adoption status and the education offered to them by their Father.

Let me say it again. Every person who has trusted Christ as Savior is considered to be a “child of God.” That is not a reference to being an adopted son; it is a reference to merely being a part of God’s family. As “children of God” everyone will have an inheritance.

But notice in vs. 17 that there is a comma followed by the conjunction “and” which gives us another level of inheritance called “joint-heir” inheritance.

Your being a “joint-heir with Christ” is contingent upon something, which is why you have the words “if so be” following the semicolon. That “suffering with Him”, which will result in an additional and different kind of inheritance (joint-heir inheritance) and an additional and different kind of glory (glorified together with Christ), is a suffering specifically connected with your education as an adopted son who is learning to think, live and labor with His Father.

What we have been calling “sonship” (the exact word “sonship” is not in the Bible, but serves as the shorthand term for describing the entire process of what the ‘adoption as sons’ includes) the Bible calls “godly edification”.

So, over the last several sessions we left Romans 8:14 and we went back to get a basic understanding of biblical adoption. As we did that, we found that God used David and Solomon, in the interlude of mercy and blessing, to write down the basic structure of adoption as well as the doctrine that Israel would operate under in their adoption.

We also saw how that information was recorded in the opening chapters of the book of Proverbs where Solomon writes down that which his father David instructed him as an adopted son. We learned about David being a “man after God’s own heart” which was not the case for Solomon in his latter years.

1 Kings 11:1 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; <sup>2</sup> Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. <sup>3</sup> And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. <sup>4</sup> For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, *that* his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and **his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.**

Solomon was educated by his father David, but Solomon did not retain that education; it was not “written on his heart”. In order for that doctrine to do its job, it has to be operating in a person. We call that the “effectual working” of the word of God. This cannot be just education but it also has to be edification. I, as your pastor, cannot edify you, that can only be done by you, in

cooperation with the Spirit, taking your education and making a real part of you in your inner man.

Solomon's lack of edification showed up when he was victimized by Satan's policy of evil, especially by the "strange woman" and the "evil man". These attacks did come out of the blue for Solomon, for his education warned him about both of these. Solomon was given doctrine that, if it had been written on his heart, would have dealt with those attacks. As we examine the basic structure of adoption in the book of Proverbs, we will see these attacks in some detail. For now, let's just quickly identify them.

Proverbs 2:10-15 – "the evil man" = the wisdom and ungodly evil of this world.

Proverbs 2:10 When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; 11 Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: 12 **To deliver thee from the way of the evil man**, from the man that speaketh froward things; 13 Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; 14 Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; 15 Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths:

Proverbs 2:16-22 – "the strange woman" = the satanic policy of evil

Proverbs 2:16 **To deliver thee from the strange woman**, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words; 17 Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. 18 For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. 19 None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. 20 That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous. 21 For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. 22 But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

But let's return to our point. If you have David and Solomon as the main examples of sonship education given to Israel as the foretaste picture in advance of their own adoption as sons, it would stand to reason that you would find the curriculum for sonship education given by David to Solomon as it gets recorded in God's word. Therefore, we can narrow down our search to the books that Solomon wrote because he is going to be utilized by God as a son who gets adopted and educated by an already-existing educated son; David himself.

So, to find the book wherein lies the sonship curriculum, we will look at the writings of Solomon. It cannot be Ecclesiastes because that is the account of a son who failed, who went instead to the competing wisdom of this world. It also cannot be the Song of Solomon because it deals with another aspect of an already educated son. The curriculum cannot be found in the Song of Solomon but what is found is how the Shulamite woman (the remnant) is delivered by her Beloved (the Lord Jesus Christ) from the satanic policy of evil (represented by Solomon!).

So that really leaves us with only one book: The Proverbs. When we look in Proverbs, we find just what we thought we should find; a son being educated by his father.

Proverbs 1:8 **My son**, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 2:1 **My son**, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;

Proverbs 3:1 **My son**, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

Proverbs 4:10 Hear, O **my son**, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

Proverbs 5:1 **My son**, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding:

Proverbs 6:20 **My son**, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 7:1 **My son**, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

This instruction continues all the way through chapter 9. Solomon is writing down the instruction given to him by David, his father. But notice how the wording changes after chapter 9 is over.

Proverbs 10:1 The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

Understanding this should give you more understanding and appreciation for the Bible's sense & sequence: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

- Proverbs 1-9 – David adopts Solomon and educates him
- Ecclesiastes – the foolishness of the wisdom of the world (evil man)
- Song of Solomon – the deliverance from the satanic plan of evil – strange woman

In the first 9 chapters of the book of Proverbs, you can clearly see, from all the exhortations, that (sonship education) going on:

Proverbs 3:1 **My son**, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:  
<sup>2</sup> For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. <sup>3</sup> Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:  
<sup>4</sup> So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. <sup>5</sup> Trust

in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. <sup>6</sup> In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 4:20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Proverbs 6:20 My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 21 Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. 22 When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

Proverbs 7:1 My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. <sup>2</sup> Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. <sup>3</sup> Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. <sup>4</sup> Say unto wisdom, Thou *art* my sister; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman: <sup>5</sup> That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words.

Now these are exhortations. David got the doctrine from God, his heavenly Father and he teaches it to his son, Solomon. Solomon records that doctrine, along with the exhortations, in the first 9 chapters of Proverbs. As you would expect, there is a format or structure to all of this. There is structure to the material presented and there is structure as to how Solomon is to deal with it. That structure is the same in both programs because it is an inherent part of adoption.

In other words, there is a sequence to the material presented and that doctrine is going to get written on the heart in a specific order. So when we are told by our apostle, the apostle Paul, that we are “sons of God” and we have received “the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father,” if we want to further our understanding and appreciation of what it all means to be adopted by our Heavenly Father and if we want to know the value and gravity of what adoption means to God and what it means in the Bible, then we will have that presented in the first 9 chapters of Proverbs where God has already laid out the basic structure of adoption. We will observe that structure, but not the doctrine that accompanies it; that belongs to only to God’s program with Israel.

In Proverbs 1-9 we will see a number of things including:

- The pattern of adoption
- When it’s the right time to be exhorted
- What kind of things are going to tempt us to be removed from this education God wants to give you
- When it is proper to stop and remind you of:
  - the value of this education as God’s son

- the weight and the gravity of it
- the need to press on in it
- What kind of dangers and pitfalls will be along the way
- What kind of enemy we will face and what his tactics are going to be

All of these (and more) are contained in these 9 chapters of Proverbs as David educates his son so that his son can function unto God, being his Heavenly Father.

I want to emphasize once again, the doctrine that gets written on Solomon's heart will not be the same as the doctrine that gets written on your heart. But the format or structure of the curriculum will be the same. Because of that, when you take what is covered (in the curriculum structure) in Proverbs 1-9 and overlay it over Romans - II Thessalonians, those letters of Paul follow that exact same pattern for sonship edification as contained in Proverbs. Just as Hebrews – Jude do the same! Now, I don't mean to imply that there is a chapter by chapter match, or a verse by verse match or anything along those lines, but the pattern of the components is the same.

Even though we have taken a peek inside Proverbs, we really have not observed the format or structure of the curriculum. We want to get ourselves to that, but there are a couple of very important loose ends that need to be tied up before we do.

The first thing is for you to understand that sonship isn't just something that God wanted to do with the remnant of Israel or just something that He wants to do with us, the members of the church, the body of Christ, but it's something that He intended to do with all mankind from the very beginning of creation.

Knowing that causes you to know that sonship isn't just a big issue with God; sonship edification is THE BIG ISSUE with God and it has always been that way. That's why the Godhead is Father, Son and Spirit. When the Son took on flesh, it was the Spirit that put the heart of the Father into the heart of the Son, and that is what we call sonship. If you want to get technical and call it what the Bible calls it, then it is the very process involved in the adoption of sons. Or you could even say that Jesus went through the education to produce a godly edification.

But no matter what term you use to describe it, the issue of the Father adopting a son for the purpose of educating and training the son to labor with Him in His business is the single biggest issues with God your heavenly Father. That is why you encounter sonship from the very beginning with Adam in the garden of Eden. I'm telling you this without going into all the details of it. You can study that out on your own. In the meantime, here are the salient points:

- The issue of being educated into God's wisdom (and having God's heart imparted to another's heart) is something unique to only one segment of God's creation: Man
- Angelic beings are created with wisdom already 'built in'

- God created man (not angels) with the uniqueness of being able to function as a son with God as his Father – this is the issue of “godliness” (created in God’s likeness)

Genesis 1:26 **And God said**, Let us make man in our image, **after our likeness**: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Notice: “And God said, ....” He didn’t have to say anything at all. He said it so that it got heard. God actually said out loud what He was going to do with man and the only other creatures that could have benefited from hearing that were the angelic beings.

- Unlike the angels, beginning with Adam, man is going to have to be educated into God’s wisdom
- God’s intent is that He and He alone be the Father and the teacher

That is, man was created in the first place to be a being that is capable of receiving, and having imparted to him, the heart of God his Father, by means of a specific curriculum of education, resulting in the Father and the son laboring together to accomplish the will and the business of the Father.

It is true that from his creation, Lucifer was made to be “full of wisdom”.

Ezekiel 28:11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, <sup>12</sup> Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, **full of wisdom**, and **perfect in beauty**. <sup>13</sup> Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. <sup>14</sup> **Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth**; and I have set thee *so*: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. <sup>15</sup> Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

Yet, he was not created in God’s likeness as Adam was. Just think for a moment what must have been going through Satan’s mind when man showed up on day 6. God took the basest of elements; dirt. He formed it, breathed on it and then declared that this hunk of dirt is going to have dominion on the earth. Man is to be the monarch of the earth, not Satan!

Added to that is the issue that man wasn’t created with a fullness of wisdom already in him. He was created so that he would have to be taken and educated as a son by God as his Father. Through that intimacy of fellowship and personal education, man would have the heart of God



his Father imparted to his heart so that they would labor together in the Father's business in a way that no angel would ever be able to do!

The primary reason we're going over this is to underscore the fact that from the very moment man was created, sonship education and godly edification was the BIG issue. God knew it, Satan certainly knew it, Adam should have known it and we are supposed to know it.

So why is this important to us? Because one of the issues in crying, Abba, Father, (and one of the components that produces that cry in us), is to understand and appreciate just how BIG of an issue this sonship education and edification is to God Himself.

Man, at his creation, was not made to be as beautiful or as wise as Satan was at his creation, but there was something unique and special about this dirt clod:

- 1) Even though the beasts and birds were also made of the dirt, unlike them, this dirt clod was made "in the image" and "after the likeness" of God.
- 2) This creature (man) had no natural wisdom to rule and reign and have dominion over the earth, but he actually had something that was better than having natural wisdom: he had the privilege of being taught by God. (Of being educated to think like God, live like God, and labor in the same business as God Himself (ruling the earth)).

In order to be successful with his Plan of Evil, Satan was going to have to do something to break up that relationship and that educational process between God and man. Man isn't created with wisdom built-in, he is created with the ability to be educated. And the plan is that God will educate man in a wisdom that far outstrips Satan's wisdom.

God begins the education of Adam from the beginning. One of the things that God is going to educate Adam in is God's wisdom in discerning good and evil. Notice what God says in Genesis 2.

Genesis 2:18 And the LORD God said, **It is not good** that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Again the LORD "said" something out loud. What He said was to define a condition that God considers to be "not good". Now, let me ask you a question, what was the single prohibition given to Adam (and Eve) while they were in the garden? They were not eat of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil". But God had already begun to educate Adam concerning some basic things that are "good" and "not good."

Here is my point: The intent in keeping Adam and Eve from that tree was not that they would never know good and evil. The intent was that they learn about it from God. They were not to figure out good and evil on their own and they were not to learn it from someone other than God. God knew there was a competing wisdom; Satan's corrupted wisdom.

Ezekiel 28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, **thou hast corrupted thy wisdom** by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

God wants man to learn good and evil from Him. God wants to impart His wisdom to man and God has a plan to educate and instruct man all about good and evil. The command to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is not about testing man's volition. It is about God educating man as a son, teaching him to think and live as God does, so that man can labor with God in His business. It's about God imparting the things in His heart to the heart of man. God fully intends for man to learn about good and evil, He just plans for man to learn it from Him alone, in a specific order that will install the wisdom of God into the inner man of Adam.

The thing that makes this tree special, and the prohibition put on it, and why it's called what it is all designed to put on display the seriousness of God doing all of Adam's education.

The big idea behind that tree was that there existed a competing wisdom to God's wisdom and Adam needed to understand that. Adam was never to allow that other wisdom to sever the Father-son relationship and Father-to-son education that God was giving him. That tree contained this competing wisdom that really did exist in the universe.

What I want you to see is that man, who is not so beautiful, not so wise, not so powerful, not so prestigious and not so special except that God created him in His likeness. God's going to make him wise because God's going to educate him and teach him what wisdom is. God's going to teach him what knowledge of good and evil is.

So when God chooses one tree as off-limits, it is no accident that the one tree that they are not to eat of is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And now man has a choice and it is a BIG choice. The major issue between God and man is, Will you submit to God's education or not? Will you let God tell you and authoritatively determine what is good and what is evil so that you will "love that which is good and abhor that which is evil" or not?

There are 2 main reasons why we are going over this. The first is because you, like Adam, have a choice to make. You, in your life, are either going to operate on God's wisdom or you are going to operate on the wisdom of this world. It's going to be one or the other and you will decide which it will be. Like Adam, there is a competing wisdom vying for your attention. But you are to know the "end" of that wisdom is death – and I mean that in more ways than one. Just as that competing wisdom spelled death for Adam, it will for you too. And you are supposed to think about that, at the very outset, as you make a choice to be educated in your Father's wisdom. Your Father's wisdom is the only wisdom that brings life!

But there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> reason for going over this. One of the things you are to understand before you begin your education is just how big an issue this sonship/adoption education and edification is

to God. As I have already said, it is THE big thing to Him. And we went back to Genesis to show you that it was the big thing with God from the beginning and it would have been the big thing if Adam had not sinned. Think about that. God didn't just come up with the Father/Son adoption/education issue because mankind became sinners. Neither is it something that came up with just for the body of Christ in the dispensation of grace. He would have done (and had every intention of doing) the exact same thing if man had never fallen, and it would have worked perfectly.

And before you can fully and properly make that cry of "Abba, Father," one of the things you have to appreciate is just how big of an issue this is to God Himself. And this should cause you to really understand and appreciate why, when God was going to put His Jehovahness into effect to redeem and repossess the realms that Satan usurped, He was going to have to do it as a man. In order to get man out of the predicament he got himself into, God was going to enflesh Himself into the human race, and as such, that by necessity, means that even the Lord Jesus Christ Himself was going to have to submit to this education and edificational system of being educated by God the Father as His Son! (And that should excite you!)

I'm not going to step aside and provide an entire study to prove this at this time, but I only show you a single verse that indicates with certainty that Jesus was taught and instructed by His Father; an indication that He did not come into the world with the "built-in" wisdom of His deity. He was "God in flesh" but when He took on flesh, He was educated as a son just as God intends to do with man.

John 8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

And now I have one last thing to say about God's instruction in "good and evil." You are going to be instructed in that very wisdom that God wanted to give to Adam. The remnant also is going to be educated in what their Father considers to be "good and evil." And just to underscore that the decision-making skills of a properly educated son concerning what is good and what is not; what is evil and what is not, look at a passage that verifies that issue, and points you immediately back to this skill that was lost when man chose not to submit to God's education of good and evil, but to instead opt for another education under another competing wisdom.

Hebrews 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. <sup>13</sup> For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised **to discern both good and evil.**

The only way to discern both good and evil is going to come by this fascinating description of God's word: "use" = use of the word of God! And that is compatible with knowing that the curriculum for sonship education is going to come by the Spirit of God leading you through the curriculum as you properly "use" those words—and that will cause your thinking to be changed, it will change the way in which you live, and then you will be given an opportunity to prove what is written in your heart by laboring with God on the basis of this new information operating in your inner man. All that is wrapped up in this issue of "use" (of using the word of God as this educational and edificational system) is not just a mental education, but there's real chartable progress to it and you have to use the information; none of it is given just for giving's sake: you must make use of it or it won't work properly.

Now, if you want to understand sonship, the education of a Father imparting His heart and wisdom to His son's heart and the writing of that information on the heart of the son, then the next thing to do

is to go to the book of Proverbs and examine it to confirm that the structure of the sonship curriculum is there, and just what it entails for us as adopted sons of our Father.

Proverbs 1:1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; <sup>2</sup> To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; <sup>3</sup> To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; <sup>4</sup> To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. <sup>5</sup> A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: <sup>6</sup> To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

You need to become VERY familiar with these verses because what they contain is so important to the sonship curriculum. Therefore, we are going to spend the appropriate amount of time to get these foundations properly laid in your understanding. You will need to read these 6 verses over and over. As you read, pay attention to every word, every punctuation mark, paragraph markings and verse divisions. Now, having read through these first 6 verses, let's go back and read only vs. 1, for there is something important to see there.

Proverbs 1:1 **The proverbs** of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

The first thing to notice as the book begins, (though it may not seem all that significant), is that use of the word that designates what this whole book is: "The proverbs".

This is a book of proverbs, and that in itself give us some very important information. But before you can know what that is, you have know what a proverb is. So, what are proverbs?

In general, a proverb (any proverb, even outside of the Bible), is usually regarded as some kind of a wise teaching or short pithy saying, usually given in one sentence used to express some truth or wisdom.

Examples:

- “A rolling stone gathers no moss.”
- “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”
- “A clear conscience is a soft pillow.”
- “A close friend can become a close enemy.”
- “A dimple on the chin, the devil within.”
- “A friend in need is a friend indeed.”
- “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink.”
- “You can lead a fool to wisdom, but you can’t make him think!”
- “Penny for your thoughts.”
- “A monkey never thinks her baby’s ugly.”
- “The man who sneezes without a hanky takes matters into his own hands.”

When you look at how the commentators (and pastors) approach the book of Proverbs, they usually conclude that it is a kind of notebook assembled by Solomon over the years. They don’t see any “rhyme or reason” to them and they are just a collection of various, disconnected, pithy sayings that give you a little bit of wisdom on this or that.

I used to teach the book of proverbs just this way. I taught that every proverb stood alone as an individual wise saying. What I failed to see was the connection between them and the whole that together they composed. But that’s not what we are after here.

It is commonly agreed that proverbs are meant to impart some kind of wisdom. Also, because they are proverbs, we expect to run into some kind of metaphor or figure of speech that represents something else (such as “a sea of troubles” or “all the world’s a stage”). But when you take proverbs and group them together (and especially when you put them into a book) then you are dealing with more than just a bunch of random trueisms.

Many Bible commentators who have given any time to the book of Proverbs, usually only see them as maybe in some kind of groupings (at least there’s chapters, and that’s some kind of grouping), but when you get down to it, they’re all pretty random.

They notice that from time to time something will be said about a wife, and she’ll pop up here and there. Then up pops something about wine and liquor and later that will come up again. Then there’s something about lending money over here and that will come up again over there. Therefore, they come to the conclusion that it is all pretty random.

But that would be erroneous. The very fact that these proverbs have been collected together in a book (let alone God’s Book) should tell you that you’re dealing with something more than just a bunch of random true-isms. In fact, the proverbial style of communication is designed for the

wisdom gained by an elder through observation and experience, to be passed on to young men so that they, in turn, can become elders.

In other words, the use of proverbs is a teaching style. That style of teaching is not found only in the Bible, but it was a common style of teaching in ancient cultures of the world where elders imparted wisdom to young men so that they in turn would become elders.

So God uses the proverbial system knowing full well that it's a common and well-known teaching style used by all mankind and that it can be easily recognized and understood (even outside the context of the Bible) as an educational system; that it would be recognized as a system and a way to take knowledge and wisdom from an older, more experienced man and impart it to a younger man as he becomes an elder.

Now, what that does, as we approach the book of Proverbs, is cause us to expect and anticipate a few things about Proverbs. We should expect that it will have a DESIGN to it; that it will have a CURRICULUM to it (which is what an educational system is in the first place) and that it's not random. We are to anticipate that there's attainments to it and there's a particular course to be followed so that the wisdom can be properly imparted.

If it's all random, it wouldn't be an educational system; it would just be a devotional style of wandering and meandering around without any real defined aim or direction. (Which is the way most Christians ever approach their Bibles as a whole.)

But an educational system demands that there's design, goals, attainments, testing, and levels to the curriculum from beginning to advanced (from milk to meat).

And that's the first thing to appreciate as the book opens up: "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel". It's a book designed to educate a young man; it's going to take the wisdom and education and experience of an elder and impart that wisdom to a younger man.

Also notice that these are the proverbs of "Solomon the son of David, king of Israel". Notice the emphasis on Solomon is not on Solomon as the man of peace or on Solomon, the wise ruler of Israel, but on Solomon as David's son. And the mechanical means is going to be by David teaching him in these proverbs as he (David) was taught by God.

We know, from the Davidic Covenant, that God was to function as a Father to David (the man after God's own heart) with David as His son and we also noted that the Father-son relationship of God and David was also to be established between God and Solomon as well.

God had designed it so that He would educate David as His son, and then God would have David pass on that education to his son, Solomon. Solomon, even though he was receiving the information from his genetic father, David; Solomon was to understand and appreciate that the information and the education he was getting from David was the education his Heavenly Father wanted to give him.

God wanted Solomon to receive the information of his sonship education as if God Himself was giving it to him—but God designed for David to instruct Solomon in that education—and God would then have Solomon write and inscribe that information in the book of Proverbs as he received it from David.

Even though David was giving the information to Solomon, Solomon understood and appreciated that this wasn't just David's human wisdom as Solomon's father-elder, but it was actually the education from Solomon's Heavenly Father passed on through his earthly father, David.

Therefore, in light of all that, these verses (:2-6) become the most significant issue in this entire book of Proverbs. Verses 2-6 actually function so as to lay out the format & structure of the curriculum for sonship education and edification, whether it be David educating Solomon; God educating the remnant of Israel when they become beneficiaries of the New Covenant when God's program with Israel gets resumed and fulfilled or you receiving your education as an adopted son from your Father in this dispensation of Gentile grace.

That format (or pattern or structure) of the curriculum is all contained in these 5 verses. And that should excite you as to how much they matter to the sonship education process! And this is where we will take up in our next session.