

Proverbs 2025 Pt. 5

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, March 9, 2025

COMMUNION

Today we will observe Communion. All who profess Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord are welcome to participate. The wafer you hold is representative of the Body of Christ, broken for us. The juice, of the shed Blood of Jesus. We do well to ready ourselves to receive. Please consider the following as you open your Communion packets:

QUOTE – “Are we in the habit of coming to the Lord’s table? If so, in what frame of mind do we come? Do we draw near intelligently, humbly, and with faith? Do we understand what we are doing? Do we really feel our sinfulness and need of Christ? Do we really desire to live a Christian life, as well as profess the Christian faith? Happy is that soul who can give a satisfactory answer to these questions. Let him go forward, and persevere.”
–J. C. Ryle

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NIV)

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us. Whether you are here in person or joining via the livestream you are most welcome. Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take notes as you like. We have much to cover in a rather short space of time.

SETTING THE STAGE

KEY – Last week we began to consider three interrelated characters who appear in the Book of Proverbs: **a)** the wise; **b)** the simple; and **c)** the fool. Each character offers an idealized portrait or caricature of a type of person in the earth. Together these three figures form a spectrum—a spectrum we all happen to be on (**SLIDE**)!

Q. How does the Book of Proverbs present each character to us? How does Scripture characterize each figure?

THE WISE

KEY – Last week we completed our survey of the wise. Broadly speaking, Scripture describes the wise as those who are given to both the pursuit and application of God's ways, living with insight and understanding before the Lord and among men. They are also called the righteous, the faithful, the prudent and beyond in Proverbs. Such are regarded, rewarded and are to be emulated by all who seek to live well. The wise as characterized as: **a)** reverential (Prov. 14:16); **b)** discerning (14:15); **c)** ever-learning (18:15; 9:9); **d)** teachable (9:8; 10:8; 12:15); **e)** self-controlled (12:16; 19:11); **f)** just (24:23–25); **g)** generous or kind (14:31); **h)** cautious concerning words (14:3; 15:7; 16:23); **i)** positively impacting (12:18; 13:14); **j)** and blessed of and by God Himself (3:33, 35; 9:12)!

Q. How many realize this is the end of the spectrum to be on?

THE SIMPLE

KEY – Now what of the simple? How does Scripture define, describe and detail those who bear this label? The simple are those who operate in ignorance. They are not necessarily people of ill or evil intent per se, but they are noted for being gullible, naïve and, therefore, susceptible to the wiles of sinfulness. Such can, therefore, shift either upwards unto wisdom or downwards unto folly. This intermediate state is truly perilous!

QUOTE – “The Hebrew word rendered simple in Proverbs denotes a person who is gullible, without moral direction and inclined to evil.” –NIV Footnote

Q. What are the characteristics of the simple (i.e., more specifically)?

A1. In Need of Repentance

Proverbs 1:22–23

- 22 “How long will you who are simple love your simple ways?
How long will mockers delight in mockery
and fools hate knowledge?
23 Repent at my rebuke!
Then I will pour out my thoughts to you,
I will make known to you my teachings.

A2. In Danger of Penalty

Proverbs 1:28–33 [Lady Wisdom re: Wayward]

- 28 “. . . they will call to me but I will not answer;
they will look for me but will not find me,
29 since they hated knowledge
and did not choose to fear the Lord.
30 Since they would not accept my advice
and spurned my rebuke,
31 they will eat the fruit of their ways
and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.
32 For the waywardness of the simple will kill them,
and the complacency of fools will destroy them;
33 but whoever listens to me will live in safety
and be at ease, without fear of harm.”

NOTE – Ignorance of the ways of the Lord does not spare them from the consequence(s) of breaking His ways:

Hosea 4:6

- 6 “[M]y people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.”

A3. Invited Unto Wisdom

Proverbs 8:1–5

- 1 Does not wisdom call out?
Does not understanding raise her voice?
2 At the highest point along the way,
where the paths meet, she takes her stand;
3 beside the gate leading into the city,
at the entrance, she cries aloud:
4 “To you, O people, I call out;
I raise my voice to all mankind.
5 You who are simple, gain prudence;
you who are foolish, set your hearts on it.

Proverbs 9:1–6

- 1 Wisdom has built her house;
she has set up its seven pillars.
- 2 She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
- 3 She has sent out her servants, and she calls
from the highest point of the city,
- 4 “Let all who are simple come to my house!”
- To those who have no sense she says,
- 5 “Come, eat my food
and drink the wine I have mixed.
- 6 Leave your simple ways and you will live;
walk in the way of insight.”

A4. Susceptible**Proverbs 14:16**

- 15 The simple believe anything,
but the prudent give thought to their steps.

Proverbs 22:3 (cf. 27:12)

- 3 The prudent see danger and take refuge,
but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.

Q. Would you like a vivid illustration of this principle?**Proverbs 7:6–23**

- 6 At the window of my house
I looked down through the lattice.
- 7 I saw among the simple,
I noticed among the young men,
a youth who had no sense.
- 8 He was going down the street near her corner,
walking along in the direction of her house
- 9 at twilight, as the day was fading,
as the dark of night set in.
- 10 Then out came a woman to meet him,
dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent.
- 11 (She is unruly and defiant,
her feet never stay at home;
- 12 now in the street, now in the squares,
at every corner she lurks.)
- 13 She took hold of him and kissed him
and with a brazen face she said:

14 "Today I fulfilled my vows,
and I have food from my fellowship offering at home.
15 So I came out to meet you;
I looked for you and have found you!
16 I have covered my bed
with colored linens from Egypt.
17 I have perfumed my bed
with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.
18 Come, let's drink deeply of love till morning;
let's enjoy ourselves with love!
19 My husband is not at home;
he has gone on a long journey.
20 He took his purse filled with money
and will not be home till full moon."

21 With persuasive words she led him astray;
she seduced him with her smooth talk.
22 All at once he followed her
like an ox going to the slaughter,
like a deer stepping into a noose
23 till an arrow pierces his liver,
like a bird darting into a snare,
little knowing it will cost him his life.

A5. Potential and Capacity for Growths

Proverbs 19:25

25 Flog a mocker, and the simple will learn prudence . . .

Proverbs 21:11

11 When a mocker is punished, the simple gain wisdom;
by paying attention to the wise they get knowledge.

SUMMATIONS

KEY – Earlier I noted that these three recurring characters form a spectrum—a spectrum we are all upon. With this being said, where are you on this spectrum? Which of these three figures do you most resemble, helping to define your spiritual condition? Which are you becoming more like with the passage of time, helping to delineate your spiritual trajectory before God and among men? Do not quickly dismiss such queries!

CONCLUSION

NOTE 1 – I would call you to worship God through your giving. Please give online and/or in person.

NOTE 2 – Check out the church website for upcoming events and more (www.NewLifeBarre.org).

2 Corinthians 13:14

14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.