

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR READ THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY FOR 3/20/13

1. CONTINUING HIS MESSAGE FROM PROVERBS 4, IN PROVERBS 5 AND 6 SOLOMON AMPLIFIES THE MESSAGE HE EVIDENTLY RECEIVED FROM HIS FATHER DAVID: DO NOT BECOME INVOLVED IN ADULTERY. DAVID KNEW FROM HIS OWN EXPERIENCE THE DAMAGE THAT ADULTERY COULD DO. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DAMAGES ADULTERY BRINGS SEE PROVERBS 5:9-12; PROVERBS 6:25-29, 32. BY GOD'S GRACE, SOMON SAYS, "REJOICE IN THE WIFE OF YOUR YOUTH" (PROVERBS 5:18). GOD DOES WANT THE WONDERFUL GIFT OF OUR SEXUALITY AND OUR SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR SPOUSES RUINED BY ADULTEROUS RELATIONSHIPS. HOW DOES GOD DESCRIBE THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS HE DOES WANT US TO HAVE (EPHESIANS 5:22-32)? PRAY THAT ALL MARRIAGES AND ALL SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS MAY REFLECT THE LOVE THAT GOD HAS FOR HIS CHURCH.

2. IN PROVERBS 7 SOLOMON FURTHER DESCRIBES BOTH THE CUNNING WAYS IN WHICH SATAN WORKS TO TEMPT US AND THE DAMAGE TO LIVES THAT HE CAUSES. AND SATAN WORKS THIS WAY WITH EVERY SIN, NOT JUST ADULTERY. PERHAPS MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP HAVE EXPERIENCED THESE KINDS OF SATANIC ATTACKS IN THEIR OWN LIVES OR KNOW OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE SEDUCED WITH SATAN'S SMOOTH TALK (PROVERBS 7:21)? GOD, IN CHRIST JESUS, HAS ALREADY PROVIDED A RESCUE. SOLOMON POINTS US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION (PROVERBS 3:4-6; 6:3). WAHT DOES THE LORD PROMISE THROUGH ISAIAH (ISAIAH 1:18) AND THROUGH HOSEA, WHO HIMSELF HAD TO DEAL WITH AN ADULTEROUS WIFE AND ADULTEROUS ISRAEL (HOSEAS 13:4, 14; 14:4)? HOW DOES PAUL DESCRIBE GOD'S ACTION ON OUR BEHALF WHEN WE ARE ALIENATED FROM HIM (COLOSSIANS 1:21-22)? REJOICE WITH YOUR GROUP IN THE BOUNTIFUL MERCY OF OUR GOD WHO FORGIVES ALL OUR SINS. YOU MAY WANT TO USE THE WORDS OF THE ADVENT SONG, "O BRIDE OF CHRIST, REJOICE" (LSB 335).

3. SOME COMMENTATORS CONSIDER PROVERBS 8:22-31 TO BE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE BOOK BECAUSE IT SPEAKS OF WISDOM AS BEING AN ASPECT OF GOD'S NATURE AND AS PARTICIPATING IN THE CREATION OF THE WORLD (PROVERBS 8:27, 30). HOW IS JOHN'S DESCRIPTION OF JESUS, THE WORD, SIMILAR TO THIS DESCRIPTION OF WISDOM IN PROVERBS? SEE ESPECIALLY PROVERBS 8:23 AND JOHN 1:1; PROVERBS 8:30 AND JOHN 1:18. PAUL SPEAKS OF JESUS AS "THE WISDOM OF GOD" (I CORINTHIANS 1:24). HOW IS CHRIST THE "WISDOM OF GOD" (I CORINTHIANS 1:20-31)? FOLLOWING YOUR DISCUSSION, PRAISE JESUS USING THE WORDS OF VERSES 5 AND 6 OF THE HYMN "ONE THING'S NEEDFUL (LSB536 AND PRAY ITS PETITION "THOUGH ALL MY LIFE'S PILGRIMAGE, GUARD AND UPHOLD ME, IN LOVING FORGIVENESS, O JESUS, COMFORT ME."

4. SOLOMON CONCLUDES THIS FIRST SECTION OF PROVERBS BY PLACING WISDOM (PROVERBS 9:1-12) AND FOLLY (PROVERBS 9:13-18) AND THEIR MESSAGES SIDE BY SIDE IN ORDER TO COMPARE AND CONTRAST THEM. FOLLY TRIES TO IMITATE WISDOM IN ORDER TO GAIN MORE FOLLOWERS. EXPLAIN SOME OF THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TWO? THEN EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCES. SUMMARIZE WISDOM'S MESSAGE.

5. FOR MANY YEARS THE SIGN-OFF LINE OF A NEWS COMMENTATOR WAS "THAT'S THE WAY IT IS." MANY OF THE PROVERBS IN PROVERBS 10-11 ARE LIKE THAT. CHOOSE A FEW PROVERBS AND DISCUSS HOW WHAT IS SAID IS JUST HOW IT WORKS OUT IN LIFE, FOR GOOD OR ILL. SELECT YOUR OWN PROVERBS TO DISCUSS, BUT TRY THESE ALSO: PROVERBS 10:7, 32; PROVERBS 11:10, 12. NOW LOOK AT A FEW PROVERBS THAT SPECIFICALLY TALK ABOUT GOD. FOR EXAMPLE, LOOK AT PROVERBS 10:22, 29; PROVERBS 11:1, 20-21. HOW WOULD YOU SUMMARIZE THE MESSAGES OF THESE PROVERBS CONCERNING GOD? WHAT MIGHT THE APOSTLE PAUL SAY CONCERNING PROVERBS 11:21? SEE ROMANS 3:10-12, 21-24; 6:18; GALATIANS 5:1.

6. "THE LORD... DELIGHTS IN MEN WHO ARE TRUTHFUL" (PROVERBS 12:22). IN THE LIGHT OF PASSAGES LIKE PSALM 14:3 AND I JOHN 1:8, HOW CAN SOLOMON MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT? LOOK AT OTHER SIMILAR STATEMENTS: PROVERBS 11:1, 20; PROVERBS 8:31. WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THESE STATEMENTS? WHEN DOES THE LORD DELIGHT IN US?