



St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)

Worship Address : Cerritos High School Auditorium
12500 E. 183rd St., Cerritos, CA 90703
(Enter at Bloomfield, across Heritage Park)

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May 9, 2010

Theme: Teach Your Children Well

Text: Proverbs 1:7-8

Happy Mother's Day! This is our wish for all mothers. The task of being a mother is a daunting challenge. It is a task that requires great wisdom. It is also a great responsibility. It is a responsibility for which we will give an account to God for what we have done. Because it is a task that requires great wisdom, we want to turn to the book of wisdom—the book of Proverbs to get wisdom for the task that is before us.

The book of Proverbs is a book of wisdom, written mostly in the form of short proverbs. Most of it was written by King Solomon, who was the son of King David, and the second king of Israel. Shortly after Solomon became king, God appeared to him in a dream. God invited Solomon to ask Him for anything he wanted. Instead of asking for wealth or power, Solomon asked for wisdom. God was pleased with his request and gave him great wisdom and great wealth and power as well. In the NT, James tells us that we also can become wise people if we will simply ask God to give it to us. God's wisdom is something we desperately need in order to become the kind of parent that God wants us to be.

I am going to deal with Proverbs 1:7-8 today; but I am going to cover these verses in reverse order. I want to begin with verse 8 which says, "Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching." Solomon has said in verse 7 that true knowledge and wisdom come from God. But in this verse, he says that the primary institution through which God's knowledge comes to people is through the family. Let us be clear that the Bible defines the family in terms of one man and one woman who have become united as one for life. Children are the result of this union. The family union can be torn apart by the tragedies of death and divorce so that there are many single-parent families in our world. Scripture says that God Himself has promised to be the Father to the fatherless and motherless.

Solomon says that the primary channel through which God's knowledge and wisdom come to a person is through the family. Therefore, I will turn this promise around and apply it to mothers and fathers. We are born with a few instinctive reflexes, but not many. Most of what we know about living life comes through our mother and father. In our modern world, other people and agencies get in on the process of raising children more than before. I'm referring to day care, school systems, Sunday School, colleges and universities and so on. Still, mothers and fathers are the primary people who are responsible for instructing their children to know God. God will hold us accountable for how we have taught our children about God.



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We might say: "But I'm not a teacher or preacher." Jesus says that we are all teachers and preachers of the Gospel. He said to His disciples, "You are the light of the world." The conclusion that he drew from that was this, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father who is in heaven." The way that you live will teach your children more than anything you can say. Do your children see you reading the Bible? Do they see you in prayer? Do they see that you are enthusiastic about worship? Do you show that enthusiasm in part by arriving on time? Do they see you living the Gospel in your world? All of these things will instruct your children more than anything you or anyone else can say. You are a living, breathing, walking sermon.

In verse 7, Solomon says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and discipline." We are overloaded with knowledge today; but there are so few people who know how to use that knowledge wisely. Few people use that knowledge to the glory of God. Solomon says that true knowledge begins with the fear of the Lord. When he says this he does not mean that we should be terrified of God. The fear of the Lord begins with the realization that the God who is revealed in Scriptures does exist. It means that we worship Him. It means that we have a deep and profound reverence for his glory, power, and holiness. This reverence motivates me to obey God.

The fear of the Lord empowers us to move beyond the possession of mere information to the possession of true knowledge. We come to know where we came from why we are here and where we are going. We were created by God to live for Him in this life and to live with Him forever in the next life. As I have said, mothers and fathers have the primary responsibility for instilling this kind of fear of the Lord into our children. Mothers have a unique role in that process because they are the primary influence upon their children from birth to about six years of age. This is a great honor and privilege and responsibility. It involves nothing less than shaping and forming a human life. It has rightly been said, "The hand that rocks the cradle shapes the world."