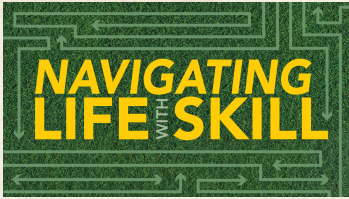


Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

The Story of Foolish Gain

Speaker:

Steve Heitland

Date:

January 8, 2023

Scriptures:

Proverbs 1:8-19

Theme: Listen to wisdom so you can resist evil gain in God's world.

Introduction: It is very difficult to make sense of our place and purpose in life. The stories that the world holds out to us picture us as the product of evolution, as the determiners of our own destinies and joy, and as the center of all things. But God's story is greater. It locates us as his creatures in his world, designed to live for his purposes and glory. And the book of Proverbs is part of that story. Proverbs orients us to the way God has designed the world, so that we can gain according to his favor and blessings. In this passage, a father is teaching his son about life in God's world and the path to true gain.

The father offers 3 responses to these competing stories:

1. The glory of listening to godly authority (8-9)

We see 3 things in the father's instruction to his son: a) the father leads; b) the father establishes the authority of the mother; and c) he sets a positive vision. As parents, and fathers especially, we must love and apply God's word to our own lives so that we can fulfill these roles in our families.

Men grow by taking responsibility for everyone and everything the Lord has entrusted to them. We cry out to God for grace and wisdom and he meets us.

2. The folly of consenting to evil (10-14)

The father recognizes the *us v. them* nature of the world. And he calls the son to be true to his identity as God's child, and thus to reject evil.

The sinners are bold and up-front with their plan: they are offering pleasure without work and without consequences.

3. The destruction of joining with evil (15-19)

The father calls the son to not follow the way of the wicked. He calls him to life.

The sinners appeal to the son with promises of pleasure and belonging. They are brazen and confident, believing that they will triumph.

The devil works to make godliness look abnormal and to make evil appear like good. He tries to confuse what is morally clear. We need God's word to lead us into truth, and we need to apply it to our lives so we can be wise and faithful.

The father exposes the sinners' motive: they are "greedy for unjust gain." It is envy and selfishness that drive them. Only in Christ is there true and lasting gain.

Questions:

1. Who or what do you envy? How do you feel like you don't measure up, or you're receiving a bum deal?
2. How do you want to grow in wisdom? Where do you recognize a lack?
3. How are you studying God's word for wisdom?