



Sermon Preached July 14th 2019
“Answers For a Complicated Life”

SERMON OUTLINE

Main Idea: Proverbs gives answers to the complexities of life with balanced application and instruction.

I. Proverbs gives answers for the complexity of life through balanced instruction. Proverbs 6:6-11; 23:4

II. Proverbs gives answers for the complexity of life through nuance. Proverbs 29:19; 17:2

III. Proverbs gives answers for the complexities of life through absolutes. Proverbs 6:32; 10:1

IV. Proverbs gives answers for the complexities of life with varying degrees of severity. Proverbs 6:16-19; 27:14

GETTING STARTED

1. What major point from the sermon stood out to you as particularly helpful? Why?

DIRECTOR'S CUT

“Seven Deadly Sins”

The medieval church had their own list of “seven deadly sins” which included pride, anger, envy, impurity, gluttony, slothfulness, and greed. These are definitely horrible sins. However, the list we find in Proverbs 6:16-19 is the Israelite version of the “seven deadly sins.” It specifically identifies things the reader should avoid. The question that stirs in our mind is, “What is the point of identifying these seven particular sins as being “hated” by God?” Why are these particular sins singled out in this context as particularly abhorrent? I think we need to keep a few things in mind as we attempt to address why these sins are singled out.

First, these kinds of lists are commonly referred to as vice lists. Vice and virtue lists were common in the ancient world and even the New Testament has numerous examples. (Vice Lists: Matthew 15:19; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Titus 3:3) (Virtue Lists: Matthew 5:2-11; 2 Peter 1:5-8; James 3:17-18) The point of these lists are to highlight particular sins or virtues and they are not intended to be taken as exhaustive list.

Second, the list in Proverbs 6:16-19 is contrasted with the things needed for living a wise life. For example, haughty eyes are in contrast to the fear of the Lord. (c.f. Proverbs 3:7) The vice list of Proverbs 6:16-19 are precisely the things not to do if you are looking to live a life that is beautiful and brings glory to God.

Third, lists like this have a tendency to break us out of complacency. Our sinful nature can rationalize our sins by saying, “it’s not as bad as other sins.” When we find our sin on a list with other detestable sins, it shakes us awake to the seriousness of our own condition. For example, in Galatians 5: 19-21 jealousy and envy are placed on the same level as sorcery.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Take a look at some of the virtue lists mentioned above. Is there anything about those lists that surprise you? In what way(s) do the vice lists challenge you?
2. (Read 2 Peter 1:5-8) How does this virtue list inspire or encourage you? What does it mean to supplement faith with virtue? What does Peter say will happen if you have these qualities?