

Speaking to the soul



Wisdom

Those who trust their own insight are foolish, but anyone who walks in wisdom is safe. Proverbs 28:26

The book of Proverbs has a great deal to say about fools. Time and again, the writer notes how stupid, ignorant and destructive they are. Many of his observations would be incredibly funny if they weren't so serious and sad. In Proverbs 26, he wrote: "A proverb in the mouth of a fool is as useless as a paralysed leg...like a thorny branch brandished by a drunk" and "an employer who hires a fool... is like an archer who shoots at random" (Proverbs 26:7,9 and 10).

His powerful descriptions of foolishness are, of course, his springboard for commending the importance of wisdom. Everything in life depends on the acquisition of wisdom, which leads to security, loving relationships, success and happiness. The writer is absolutely clear that the only one who can give wisdom is God himself. He teaches us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It is only by worshipping God and building a life based on him that we can acquire true wisdom, and because wisdom relies upon God, we need to live our lives in continual humility, recognising our total dependence on him. The moment we conclude that we are wise, we are in danger. In chapter 8, the writer represents wisdom as a woman who longs to share her wisdom with others, and the chapter concludes with a picture of the person who eagerly desires her wisdom. She says: "Joyful are those who listen to me, watching for me daily at my gates, waiting for me outside my home! For whoever finds me finds life" (Proverbs 8:34-35).

Nobody wants to be a fool, but we are all bound to end up being foolish unless we persistently and humbly seek God's wisdom. We need to keep James' encouraging advice in

mind: “If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you” (James 1:5).

QUESTION

In what aspect of your life are you particularly aware of your need for God’s wisdom?

PRAYER

Lord God, forgive me for my foolishness and help me, day by day, to seek your wisdom. Amen

