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TEACHING VALUES OF THE BOOK OF PROVERBS  
FOR THE  
CONTEMPORARY NEEDS OF JUNIOR CHILDREN

by  
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To the Faculty  
of the Biblical Seminary in New York  
with sincere appreciation  
for the help and blessing  
they have been to me

Gift of the Author

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## INTRODUCTION

TEACHING VALUES OF THE BOOK OF PROVERBS  
FOR THE CONTEMPORARY NEEDS  
OF JUNIOR CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Subject

Charles Bridges says of the book of Proverbs: "This wonderful Book is indeed a mine of Divine wisdom."<sup>1</sup> Yet the book of Proverbs is not a familiar book to many people today nor is it frequently used by Christian educators. Bridges calls attention to the distinctive character of the book as being a "Book for the Young."<sup>2</sup> This characteristic is found in frequent expressions in the book itself.<sup>3</sup>

For these reasons the book of Proverbs was chosen as the subject of this thesis. The purpose of the study is to determine what contribution the book can make to the teaching of juniors in the light of the practical nature of its content and its emphasis on instruction for the young.

Junior age children were chosen for this study

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1. Charles Bridges: An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs, Fourth Edition, Revised, p. iv.
2. Ibid., p. xiv.
3. Proverbs 1:4; 2:1; 3:1; 4:1.

because they are still in childhood, yet are old enough to understand some of the deeper Christian teachings. Also juniors are at the age when they are influenced more by conditions of the world around them. Agnes Snyder says of junior children:

The nine to twelve is moving out of the 'here and now' world of his earlier years toward the world more remote from his immediate environment both in time and in place. The concerns of the wider world are becoming increasingly his concerns.<sup>1</sup>

As a result juniors are more likely to have needs arising from the effect of present-day conditions upon them.

#### B. Definition and Delimitation of the Subject

Juniors are children from ages nine to twelve. They have certain physical and psychological needs peculiar to their development, which have been adequately treated by many authors. It is not the purpose of this thesis to deal with these needs except as they may be found particularly to be influenced and accentuated by present-day conditions. "Contemporary" refers generally to this post-war period.

By "teaching values" of the book of Proverbs is meant the content which is found to be especially

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1. Agnes Snyder: "What is Happening to Children Today?," Children's Religion, March, 1951, p. 7.

relevant to the contemporary needs of junior children and which can be taught to them effectively. Thus the book of Proverbs will be studied in light of the contemporary needs of junior children. The teaching plans and suggestions will be for Daily Vacation Bible School.

### C. Method of Procedure and Sources of Data

The first chapter will involve a study of present-day conditions which affect junior children. Then the needs of juniors resulting from the influence of these conditions will be determined. Sources for this study will be recent books, periodicals, and pamphlets dealing with present-day conditions and their effect upon children.

In the second chapter will be a study of the book of Proverbs to discover its teaching values in the light of the junior needs discovered. The primary source to be considered in connection with this chapter will be the Bible versions. The American Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, and Moffatt's translation of the Bible will be used. Commentaries on the book of Proverbs will also be consulted.

The last chapter will present, in the light of the accumulated information, specific suggestions and teaching plans for teaching the book of Proverbs to junior children.

CHAPTER I  
THE NEEDS OF JUNIOR CHILDREN  
IN THE LIGHT OF  
PRESENT-DAY CONDITIONS

CHAPTER I  
THE NEEDS OF JUNIOR CHILDREN IN THE LIGHT OF  
PRESENT-DAY CONDITIONS

A. Introduction

In her article, "What is Happening to Children Today?" Snyder says:

The question 'What is Happening to Children Today?' implies the necessity for an understanding of the world in which children are living, the impact of world forces upon children, and the interaction of children with these forces.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Snyder's statement points up the fact that present-day conditions do influence children and that needs may result from these influences.

It is the aim of this chapter to discover the needs of junior children arising from the influence of certain present-day conditions. To discover these needs, a study will be made from recent books, periodicals, and pamphlets of present-day conditions and their effects upon juniors. Then, in the light of the general emphases found, the contemporary needs of junior children will be determined.

B. Present-Day Conditions Which Affect Junior Children

The consensus of the authors consulted is that

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1. Snyder, op. cit., p. 5.

these present-day conditions tend to have the greatest influence upon junior children: (1) changes in the home, (2) changes in the church, (3) changes in the school, (4) moral breakdown in society, and (5) war.

1. Changes in the Home.

There is considerable agreement among authors as to the importance of home life and of its influence upon children. Pearl S. Buck declares, "I believe the problems of the world must first be met in the home before we will have men and women sufficiently educated for the world." <sup>1</sup> and Anna W.M. Wolf states, "The home is, at all times, the nation's first line of defence.. " <sup>2</sup> George Buttrick says that when Jesus set a little child in the midst he meant that the child and the home are central. <sup>3</sup>

It follows that changes in the home have an equally important influence upon children. Many of the changes in the home of today have been for the good of children, but some changes have tended rather to create needs or to accentuate certain basic needs of children. It is these latter changes which will be considered in this section, for their importance has been emphasized by Buttrick, who says, "Yet it remains true that home life in

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1. Pearl S. Buck: Ch. 28, At Home in the World, Our Children Today, ed. by Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, p. 343.
2. Anna W.M. Wolf: Our Children Face War, p. 35.
3. Cf. George Arthur Buttrick: "God, Children, and the Present World," Pastoral Psychology, June 1952, p.13.

our time has signally failed,"<sup>1</sup> and by Robert Goldensen, who warns:

And so, whether we start with the child who goes right or the child who goes wrong, we inevitably wind up in the home. To achieve good adjustment and to avoid delinquency, we must concentrate every resource on the improvement of family life. At a critical period like the present, when we and our young people live under greater pressures and strain than ever before, this course is not merely advisable--it is imperative.<sup>2</sup>

Changes in the home which have been found to exert the greatest influence upon junior children are: (a) urbanization, (b) mobility, (c) lack of preparation for homemaking, (d) loss of unity, and (e) parental neglect.

a. Urbanization.

In this day of war plants and trailer villages, many homes have become urban. The security of the self-sufficient farm life has been replaced by the neurotic and insecure life of urban existence.<sup>3</sup> The accompanying housing shortage has created problems for junior children in particular for it is difficult for them to be restrained in restricted living quarters.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid, p. 12.
2. Robert M. Goldenson: "Why Boys and Girls go Wrong or Right," Parents Magazine, May 1951, p. 84.  
Cf. Bernard Iddings Bell: Crisis in Education, p. 82, and Elton Trueblood: Your Other Vocation, p. 82.
3. Cf. Buttrick, op. cit., pp. 11,12.  
Cf. Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg: "Changing Family Patterns," Our Children Today, op.cit., pp. 3,4,7,8.
4. Cf. Snyder, op.cit., p.7.  
Bell, op.cit., pp.86-89.  
Gruenberg, op.cit., p. 1.

b. Mobility.

The frequent moving of many families today has resulted in what Buttrick calls a "half-homeless civilization."<sup>1</sup> The frequent changing of surroundings, school, friends, and church has resulted in instability of home life.<sup>2</sup>

c. Lack of Preparation for Homemaking.

Today there is a lack of preparation for homemaking which has manifested itself in the general inadequacy of parents to meet the responsibilities of parenthood.<sup>3</sup> Parents are often more frightened and insecure than they are aware of being.<sup>4</sup> They are too ready to relinquish the responsibilities which are primarily theirs and to delegate the work of the home to the school and to the church.<sup>5</sup> But the family still remains the most important institution to deal with the spiritual problems of its children,<sup>6</sup> for "a child's religion starts with his parents."<sup>7</sup> And the home cannot escape its teaching responsibility.<sup>8</sup> It is the responsibility

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1. Buttrick: op.cit., p. 12  
Cf. Gruenberg: op.cit., pp. 15, 23.
2. Cf. Gruenberg: op.cit., pp. 15, 16, 23.  
Cf. Wolf: op. cit., pp. 150-152.  
Cf. Goodwin Watson: "Can Your Child Take It?" Parents' Magazine, June, 1951, p. 31.
3. Cf. Gruenberg: op. cit., pp. 4, 10, 11.  
Cf. J.C. Russell: "The Place of the Home and the School in Delinquency," The Commonwealth, March 31, 1952, p. 75.
4. Cf. Ibid., pp. 78, 79.
5. Cf. Gruenberg: op. cit., p. 17.  
Cf. Malcolm Hatfield: Children in Court, p. 3.  
Cf. Bell: op. cit., p. 81.
6. Cf. Arthur L. Swift, Jr.: "Childhood and Spiritual Values," Gruenberg, op. cit., p. 331.
7. Children's Bureau: Understanding Juvenile Delinquency, p. 25.
8. Cf. Gruenberg, op. cit., p. 254.

of the parents to show children how to live and what to live for. This responsibility cannot be delegated effectively.<sup>1</sup>

#### d. Loss of Unity

Closely associated with the delegation of the responsibilities of the home has come a loss of the unity of the home.<sup>2</sup> Of this change Gruenberg says:

Increasingly, however, the changing forces in modern life have broken through the castle walls of the private home. They are invaded by uninvited voices in ways and in forms that are often very disconcerting. Children are exposed to displays and discoveries among which sometimes parents feel they can make no selection.<sup>3</sup>

In their study of delinquent and non-delinquent children Eleanor and Sheldon Glueck point out that the authority of the family is weakened by this loss of unity and lack of family loyalty and cohesiveness.<sup>4</sup>

#### e. Parental Neglect

Undoubtedly the most serious and the most pathetic change in homes today is that of the parents themselves. The Gluecks found that maternal or parental neglect and the

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1. Cf. Bell, op. cit., p. 83.  
Cf. "Function of Religion in the Family," The International Journal of Religious Education, October, 1950, p. 12.
2. Cf. Watson, op. cit., p. 31.  
Cf. Russell, op. cit., p. 78.  
Cf. Bell, op. cit., pp. 94-96.  
Cf. Paul R. Mort and William S. Vincent: A Look at Our Schools, pp. 53, 54.
3. Gruenberg: We, the Parents, op. cit., pp. 210, 211.
4. Cf. Eleanor and Sheldon Glueck: Delinquents in the Making, p. 54.

careless oversight of children were the major causes of maladjustment and delinquency.<sup>1</sup> Wolf emphasizes the importance of parents' attitudes toward the children<sup>2</sup> and Gruenberg points out that children's security must depend upon the people in the family, namely the parents, rather than upon the family's staying in one place.<sup>3</sup> The conclusion of the report on "Basic Causes of Delinquency" of the Commonwealth Club of California says that "a loving atmosphere in the home in which the child grows up is the most important thing and the lack of it is a first-rate basic cause of delinquency."<sup>4</sup>

Wolf says of parents today:

Today's parents are under attack. Whether it is from the press, the pulpit, the lecture platform, or from thousands of voices or thousands of park benches or in living rooms where Americans gather, the finger of blame is invariably pointed at them. How their children turn out, parents are warned, rests wholly in their hands.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Changes in the Church.

Concerning the importance of the influence of the

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 52.  
Cf. Sanford Bates: Delinquency Can be Prevented, p.6.  
Cf. Logan C. Landrum: Our Delinquent Children, p.5.  
Cf. Richard L. Jenkins: To Parents About Delinquency, pp. 7, 14, 15.  
Cf. Hatfield, op.cit., pp. 8, 14.
2. Cf. Wolf, op.cit., p. 166.
3. Cf. Gruenberg: Our Children Today, pp. 15, 16.
4. Stuart R. Ward (ed.): "Basic Causes of Delinquency," The Commonwealth, March 31, 1952, p. 73.  
Cf. Harriet Lake Goldberg: Child Offenders, p. 182.
5. Wolf, op. cit., p. 147.

church upon children, Malcolm Hatfield says, "Religious guidance has a decided effect on a child's moral character," and also says, "There is a pointed connection between lack of church training and crime."<sup>1</sup>

But the church today seems to have undergone some undesirable and weakening changes. Bernard Iddings Bell accuses the church of "going in more and more for sociability, sentimentality, ceremonial without significance, and unctuous utterance of pseudo-ethical trivialities."<sup>2</sup> J. C. Russell attributes a portion of the cause of juvenile delinquency to the failure of the church to sense present-day needs.<sup>3</sup>

Boegner maintains that:

...the post-Christian paganism whose attacks are so powerfully shaking the church of our time is a more formidable foe than the paganism of the days of Nero and Marcus Aurelius.<sup>4</sup>

The church in such a condition is not conducive to a vital influence upon the home generally or upon children particularly. Buttrick says that belief in God is fitful rather than regulative and that in our world today, which Elton Trueblood has called a "cutflower civilization", "it is strange that any child survives."<sup>5</sup>

To point up further the grave situation of the

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1. Hatfield, op.cit., p. 68.  
Cf. Russell, op.cit., p. 77.
2. Bell, op.cit., p. 16.
3. Cf. Russell, op.cit., p. 75.
4. Marc Boegner: "After Christianity - What?," The Christian Century, March 7, 1951, p. 297.
5. Buttrick, op.cit., p. 12.

church today, Snyder declares, "Gnawing at the very roots of our culture, threatening to destroy it, is the lack of faith in God and man."<sup>1</sup> In such a time of secularism, there seems to be no room for spiritual things.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Changes in the School.

Ernest Melby says that "no social agency touches the life of the home in as vital a way as the school" and that schools today are a striking example of cultural lag in our society.<sup>3</sup> A false sense of values and lax discipline, inadequate curricula and methods, and secularism are changes in the school which have been found to contribute to this situation.

#### a. False Sense of Values and Lax Discipline.

Greatly indicative that something is wrong in the educational system today is the observation of what has happened and is happening to the minds and characters of people.<sup>4</sup> America has come to have a false sense of values, with the result that there is an over-emphasis on money, pleasure, and power.<sup>5</sup> This condition is emphasized by John Crider, who says, "It is difficult to imagine how a nation of

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1. Snyder, op.cit., p. 71
2. Cf. Boegner, op.cit., p. 298.
3. Cf. Earnest O. Melby: "The Changing Role of Education," Our Children Today, op.cit., p. 277.
4. Cf. Bell, op.cit., p. 9.  
Cf. Melby, op.cit., p. 279.
5. Cf. Bell, op.cit., p. 22.

popsicle-sucking, Howdy-Doody viewing citizens can lead the free world through the perilous months and years ahead." <sup>1</sup> It is the conclusion of Crider, Melby, and Bell that this state of affairs is due in part, at least, to failure on the part of the school.<sup>2</sup>

b. Inadequate Curricula and Methods.

Four authors point out that inadequate curricula and methods which attempt to standardize all pupils tend to produce maladjustments and frustrations.<sup>3</sup>

c. Secularism.

Bell points out the inconsistency of printing "In God We Trust" on coins while maintaining so great a separation between religion and secular training.<sup>4</sup> To quote Bell concerning this matter:

We need to combat the notion that the only attitude toward God which is legitimate in a tax-supported school is the attitude that ignores God as though He does not exist, or if He does exist, does not matter.<sup>5</sup>

Dr. Luther Weigle says that the nation's schools "may be neutral as to the strife of the sects, but they cannot be

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1. John H. Crider: "Picking Up the Pieces," Saturday Review of Literature, August 25, 1951, p. 4.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 4.  
Cf. Melby, op.cit., p. 279.  
Bell, op.cit., pp. 8,9.
3. Cf. Glueck, op.cit., p. 20.  
Cf. Hatfield, op.cit., p. 55.  
Cf. Mort and Vincent, op.cit., pp. 18-20.  
Cf. Frank A. Merrill: Problems of Child Delinquency, pp.97-99.
4. Cf. Bell, op.cit., pp. 222-224.  
Cf. Robert P. Knight: "Parents and Children in a Time of World Crisis," Pastoral Psychology, June 1952, p. 17.
5. Bell, op.cit., pp. 221,222.

neutral as to God."<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Moral Breakdown in Society.

Realization of the seriousness of the breakdown in the morals of today is seen in the following statement by a leader of the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth:

We hope to rear a generation that can really 'take' American life as it is lived today. Our divorce, suicide, and delinquency statistics indicate that modern American life is too much for some people.<sup>2</sup>

Wehrli continues with this statement:

Morally and spiritually, people are likely to live their lives as a series of emergencies, each one of which causes them to improvise more or less frantically. The cost to the victim is great nervous exhaustion, lack of peace of mind, and instability of character.<sup>3</sup>

Agreement of authors reveals divorce and poor discipline and juvenile delinquency as primary evidences of this breakdown.

##### a. Divorce

Concerning divorce Morris Ernst and David Loth say:

In the last ten years eight million Americans have walked out of court with a divorce degree...They and their three or four million children represent

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1. "Religion in Education: More Time for Fourth R," Presbyterian Life, December 12, 1953, p. 19.
2. "Spiritual Values to Be Stressed at the White House Conference," The International Journal of Religious Education, July-August 1950, p. 37.
3. A. Wehrli; "A Troubled World Seeks Anchorage," The International Journal of Religious Education, October 1952, p. 5.

the core of the divorce problem in this country.<sup>1</sup>

Leona Baumgartner declares two-thirds of the children affected in cases of divorce are under ten years of age and that one out of eight children does not live with two parents.<sup>2</sup> Snyder points out that the quality of present-day human relations is reflected in the ready appeal to divorce courts in the case of family disagreements.<sup>3</sup>

b. Poor Discipline and Delinquency.

Moral breakdown is evidenced most clearly among children by the prevalence of poor discipline and juvenile delinquency between which there is a close relationship.<sup>4</sup> The Gluecks found that lawbreakers, more than non-delinquents, grew up in family atmospheres not conducive to the developments of obedience to legitimate authority.<sup>5</sup>

In a publication of the Children's Bureau are these facts:

In a study of 500 delinquent boys the fact was brought out that the age at which the largest number first appeared in court was between 11 and 13...Almost a half of the group were giving noticeable signs of becoming delinquents at the age of 8 or younger.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Morris L. Ernst and David Loth: For Better or For Worse, p. 1.
2. Cf. Leona Baumgartner: "A Look at Children in the U.S.A.," Our Children Today, op.cit., pp. 20,21.
3. Cf. Snyder, op.cit., p. 7.
4. Cf. Bell, op.cit., p. 85.
5. Cf. Glueck, op.cit., p. 33.  
Cf. Bell, op.cit., p. 33.
6. "Some Facts about Juvenile Delinquency," U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, p. 5.

Progressive methods of education which employ extreme "laissez-faire" attitudes toward children, and the influence of the "new psychology," which has advised parents against disciplining or frustrating their children for fear of producing repressions, inhibitions, or complexes, have been instrumental in bringing about the present state of poor discipline.<sup>1</sup> Milton Senn points out that too extreme permissiveness is as disastrous to children as too rigid control and amounts to nothing more than neglect.<sup>2</sup>

The present-day impact of discipline problems and delinquency is seen in the following advice to parents by John Gutknecht, States' Attorney of Cook County, Illinois, urging:

More frequent visitations to the woodshed as a prime curb to juvenile delinquency. When the woodshed comes back to its own, we can forget the jail...The woodshed has been forgotten by the average parent.<sup>3</sup>

Further emphasis upon the relationship of poor discipline to delinquency is made by Edwin Lukas, who declares: "Though crime takes but a moment to commit, it requires a young life to prepare."<sup>4</sup>

#### 5. War.

That war and the present atomic age have a decided

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1. Cf. Knight, op.cit., p. 17.
2. Cf. Milton J.E. Senn: "Permissiveness in the Early Years," Our Children Today, op.cit., p. 122.
3. Clayton Knowles: "City Youth Addicts Estimated at 7,500," The New York Times, November 25, 1953, p. 14.
4. Edwin Lukas: "Crime Takes But a Moment to Commit," Ethical Frontiers, p. 27.

effect, both directly and indirectly, upon children, is the conclusion of numerous authors. Buttrick charges the present world as being a "warring civilization," more skilled in arms than in strategies of peace.<sup>1</sup>

Sister Mary Amatora maintains in her article "Emotional Stability of Children in the Atomic Age:" "The present atomic age is not one conducive to the development of emotionally stable children!"<sup>2</sup> Baumgartner says of this age:

The anxiety of the times adds to the complications of child-rearing today, and no one knows what new demands tomorrow will put on parents...A state of permanent crisis seems to hang over every home..<sup>3</sup>

In such a time of worries and threats of war and destruction, children do become disturbed and anxious.<sup>4</sup> Many children today have never known a world of peace. As they grow older they can make no plans for the future.<sup>5</sup> Of the particular effect of this age upon junior children, Snyder says:

The nine to twelve is normally passing through an aggressive, pugnacious period in his own development from which he needs to be led into other than aggressive techniques in solving difficulties. A world characterized by conflict as this is today fans, rather than tempers, the combative spirit of the nine to twelve.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Cf. Buttrick, op. cit., p. 12.
2. Sister Mary Amatora: "Emotional Stability of Children in the Atomic Age," Education, March 1951, p. 448.
3. Baumgartner, op.cit., p. 27.
4. Cf. Baumgartner: "Children Growing Up Now Are More Anxious," Science News Letter, February 9, 1952, p.89.
5. Cf. Wolf, op.cit., p. 2.  
Cf. Knight, op. cit., p. 17.
6. Snyder, op. cit., p. 7.

C. Needs of Junior Children Arising from  
These Present-Day Conditions

Authors consulted have agreed generally as to the effect of present-day conditions upon junior children and as to the needs of juniors arising from these influences. As a result of changes in the home, in the church, and in the school, of moral breakdown in society, and of war, authors have pointed out the following needs of junior children today: (1) the need for security, (2) the need for discipline, and (3) the need to know God.

1. The Need for Security.

The majority of authors maintained that the need for security arises primarily from changes in the home. Four authors contend that children feel insecure due to the urbanization of the home.<sup>1</sup> The instability of home life resulting from mobility and loss of unity in the opinion of others, has also contributed to the insecurity of children.<sup>2</sup> Still others hold that bewildered, inadequately prepared,

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1. Cf. Buttrick, op.cit., pp. 11,12.  
Cf. Gruenberg: Our Children Today, pp. 1,3,4,7,8.  
Cf. Snyder, op.cit., p. 7.  
Cf. Bell, op.cit., pp. 86-89.
2. Cf. Buttrick, op.cit., p. 12.  
Cf. Gruenberg: Our Children Today, pp.15,16,23,210,211.  
Cf. Wolf, op.cit., pp. 150-152.  
Cf. Watson, op.cit., p. 31.  
Cf. Russell, op.cit., p. 78.  
Cf. Bell, op.cit., pp. 94-96.  
Cf. Mort and Vincent, op.cit., pp. 53,54.

and insecure parents have affected their children's security by transmitting their own insecurity to them.<sup>1</sup> Considerable emphasis was given to the important influence of the loving concern of parents for their children and to the especially important influence of parental neglect upon children's sense of security.<sup>2</sup>

Several authors maintain that children need help in developing a sense of right and wrong and that the absence of limits and definite rules not only hinders them in this sense but also makes them feel insecure.<sup>3</sup>

Dorothy Barclay maintains that with the trend away from the "child-centered family" to the "Family-centered home," there is a growing realization that sensible and well-administered household rules contribute not only to the parents' peace of mind but also to the children's sense of security.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Cf. Gruenberg: *Our Children Today*, pp. 4,10,11,17.  
Cf. Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 75,78,79.  
Cf. Hatfield, *op. cit.*, p. 3.  
Cf. Bell, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
2. Cf. Glueck, *op. cit.*, p. 52.  
Cf. Bates, *op. cit.*, p. 6.  
Cf. Landrum, *op. cit.*, p. 5.  
Cf. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 7,14,15.  
Cf. Hatfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 8,14.  
Cf. Wolf, *op. cit.*, p. 166.  
Cf. Gruenberg: *Our Children Today*, pp. 15,16.  
Cf. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 73.  
Cf. Goldberg, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
3. Cf. *Understanding Juvenile Delinquency*, p. 8.  
Cf. James L. Hymes, Jr.: "When to Say No to Your Child," *Parents' Magazine*, January 1953, p. 28.  
Cf. Mary Fisher Languir: "Discipline: Means and Ends," *Our Children Today*, p. 134.
4. Cf. Dorothy Barclay: "An Introduction to Rules and Law," *New York Times Magazine*, November 30, 1952, p. 52.

Five authors point out that the effect of divorce upon the home also makes children insecure.<sup>1</sup>

All but a few of the authors maintain that the school has contributed to the insecurity of children by its false sense of values and lack of proper discipline<sup>2</sup> and by its failure to adapt methods and curricula to the needs of the pupils.<sup>3</sup>

Insecurity of both parents and children has been attributed by many authors to the fears and anxieties of war and the atomic age.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. The Need for Discipline.

Authors have agreed generally that the need for discipline arises from the failure of the home and the school

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1. Cf. Ernst and Goth, op.cit., p. 1.  
Cf. Baumgartner: "A Look at Children in the U.S.A.,"  
Our Children Today, pp. 20,21.  
Cf. Hatfield, op.cit., p. 15.  
Cf. Bates, op.cit., p. 6.
2. Cf. Melby, op.cit., pp. 277-279.  
Cf. Bell, op.cit., pp. 8,9,22,32-35, 218,219.  
Cf. Crider, op.cit., p. 4.  
Cf. Knight, op.cit., p. 17.  
Cf. A.B. Corrigan: "Educating the Best in the Child,"  
Education, December 1951, p. 532.
3. Cf. Glueck, op.cit., p. 200.  
Cf. Hatfield, op.cit., p. 55.  
Cf. Mort and Vincent, op.cit., pp. 18-20.  
Cf. Merrill, op.cit., pp. 97-99.
4. Cf. Buttrick, op.cit., p. 12.  
Cf. Amatora, op.cit., p. 448.  
Cf. Baumgartner, op.cit., p. 27.  
Cf. "Children Growing Up Now Are Made Anxious," op.cit.,  
pp. 17,18.  
Cf. "Understanding Juvenile Delinquency," op.cit., p.18.

to administer proper discipline. On the part of the home, the failure results from the loss of unity,<sup>1</sup> the lack of preparation for homemaking,<sup>2</sup> parental neglect,<sup>3</sup> the effect of the advice of modern psychology to parents,<sup>4</sup> and the effects of broken homes due to divorce.<sup>5</sup> According to Knight and Bell, the failure on the part of the school is a result of extreme progressive methods of education and their attending lack of restriction.<sup>6</sup>

A.B. Corrigan and Bell add that children today need corrections in their sense of values. They need to learn to think and to do honest labor rather than "getting by."<sup>7</sup>

Four authors emphasize the need for discipline by bringing out the relationship of poor discipline to juvenile delinquency.<sup>8</sup> The prevalence of delinquency among children

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1. Cf. Watson, op. cit., p. 31.  
Cf. Russell, op. cit., p. 78.  
Cf. Bell, op. cit., pp. 94-96.  
Cf. Gruenberg: We the Parents, pp. 210,211.  
Cf. Glueck, op. cit., p. 54.  
Cf. Mort and Vincent, op. cit., pp. 53,54.
2. Cf. Gruenberg: "Changing Family Patterns," pp. 4,10,11,17.  
Cf. Knowles, op. cit., p. 14.  
Cf. Russell, op. cit., p. 75.  
Cf. Hatfield, op. cit., p. 3.  
Cf. Bell, op. cit., p. 81.
3. Cf. Glueck, op. cit., pp. 52,58.  
Cf. Bell, op. cit., p. 33.
4. Cf. Knight, op. cit., p. 17.
5. Cf. Hatfield, op. cit., p. 15.  
Cf. Bates, op. cit., p. 6.
6. Cf. Knight, op. cit., p. 17.  
Cf. Bell, op. cit., pp. 218,219.
7. Cf. A.B. Corrigan; "Educating the Best in the Child,"  
Education, December, 1951, p. 232.
8. Cf. Bell, op. cit., pp. 33, 85.  
Cf. Glueck, op. cit., p. 68.  
Cf. Knowles, op. cit., p. 14.  
Cf. Lukas, op. cit., p. 27.

is of particular significance in pointing up the need for greater discipline.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Need to Know God

The very fact that spiritual values were considered in the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth indicates an awareness of moral breakdown in society and of a need for spiritual emphasis.<sup>2</sup>

It is the opinion of a number of authors that as a result of lack of preparation for homemaking, parents have tended to neglect the teaching of spiritual truths in the home and have left this responsibility to the church.<sup>3</sup>

Bell, Buttrick, and Russell declare that the failure of the church to exert a vital influence upon parents and children has contributed greatly to the need to know God.<sup>4</sup>

According to Bell, Knight, and Weigle, the exclusion of God from the public educational system has been an important causal factor in the rise of the need to know God.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Cf. "Some Facts about Juvenile Delinquency," op. cit., p. 5.
2. Cf. "Spiritual Values to Be Stressed at the White House Conference," op. cit., p. 37.
3. Cf. Gruenberg: "Changing Family Patterns," op. cit., pp. 4,10,11,17.  
Cf. Russell, op. cit., pp. 75,78,79.  
Cf. Hatfield, op. cit., p. 3.  
Cf. Bell, op. cit., pp. 81, 3.  
Cf. Swift, op. cit., p. 331.  
Cf. "Understanding Juvenile Delinquency," op. cit., p. 25.  
Cf. Gruenberg: We the Parents, op. cit., p. 254.  
Cf. "Function of Religion in the Family," op. cit., p. 12.
4. Cf. Bell, op. cit., p. 16.  
Cf. Buttrick, op. cit., p. 12.  
Cf. Russell, op. cit., p. 75.
5. Cf. Bell, op. cit., pp. 221, 222-224.  
Cf. Knight, op. cit., p. 17.  
Cf. "Religion in Education: More Time for the Fourth R," op. cit., p. 19.

Four authors agree to the conspicuous lack of faith in the present age.<sup>1</sup> This prevalence of lack of faith appears to be further indication of the need to know God.

#### D. Summary

To determine the needs of junior children today, the writer has sought first of all to discover what present-day conditions exert the greatest influence upon juniors. According to the authors and sources consulted, the conditions found to affect juniors most are: (1) changes in the home, (2) changes in the church, (3) changes in the school, (4) moral breakdown in society, and (5) war.

Changes in the home stressed by various authors were the urbanization of the home, the mobility of the home, the lack of preparation for home-making, the loss of unity of the home, and parental neglect.

The most important changes in the church were found to be its lack of emphasis on spiritual teaching and its tendency toward an over-emphasis on sociability.

According to a number of authors, it was seen that the significant changes in the school are the incorporation of extreme methods of progressive education, the failure to adapt curricula and methods to pupils'

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1. Cf. Boegner, *op. cit.*, p. 297.  
Cf. Buttrick, *op. cit.*, p. 12.  
Cf. Snyder, *op. cit.*, p. 7.  
Cf. Mina Miller (compiler): "These Children Need Faith," *The International Journal of Religious Education*, September, 1953, p. 6.

needs, and the influence of secularism in the schools.

Moral breakdown in society was most evident in the prevalence of divorce, juvenile delinquency, and poor discipline.

A number of authors stressed the significance of the fears, anxieties, and tensions of this post-war and atomic age upon junior children.

After discovering the present-day conditions which have the greatest influence on junior children, the needs which arise from this influence were shown.

Changes in the home, the failure of the school to adapt curricula and methods to pupils' needs, the prevalence of progressive education methods resulting in lax discipline, and the fears and anxieties of the atomic age were found to cause the need for security.

The need for discipline was shown to arise from the lax discipline accompanying the loss of unity of the home, parental neglect, lack of preparation for homemaking, and the extreme methods of progressive education in the schools.

From the failure of the home to teach religion, the weakness of spiritual emphasis in the church, the influence of secularism in public education, and the prevailing lack of faith in God these times, the need to know God was found to arise.

Therefore, in the light of this study, the needs of junior children arising from the effect of present-day conditions are (1) the need for security, (2) the need for discipline, and (3) the need to know God.

CHAPTER II  
THE BOOK OF PROVERBS  
IN RELATION TO  
THE PRESENT-DAY NEEDS OF JUNIOR CHILDREN

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A. Introduction

A preliminary study of Proverbs reveals certain general assets and limitations of the book for juniors. The general purpose of the book, as set forth in the first six verses of chapter one, presents a plan of practical instruction which is generally applicable. Bridges affirms that in Proverbs "...we see the minuteness of our Christian obligations," and that "the details of the external life, in all the diversified spheres, are given or implied with perfect accuracy, and with a profound knowledge of the workings of the human heart."<sup>1</sup> Here is a portion of the Scripture which deals with the common things of every-day life. A contributing factor to the practical nature of the book is the extensive use of concrete terms and word pictures which bring the teachings from the realm of the abstract to that of reality and practicability.<sup>2</sup> Contrast is used effectively to point up the teachings of Proverbs.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Bridges, op. cit., pp. xii, xiii.
2. Cf. Chapters 16-21 and 22-27.
3. Cf. Chapters 10-15 and 28, 29.

Also stated in the purpose of Proverbs is the special intent to instruct the young in wisdom.<sup>1</sup> This intent reappears throughout the book.<sup>2</sup>

Commentators readily deny with ample proof the accusation that the teaching of Proverbs are on a low spiritual plane.<sup>3</sup> The motto of the book itself, as stated in the key verse, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7a)<sup>4</sup> substantiates the spiritual quality of the book. Also of significance in relation to the religious teachings of Proverbs is their similarity to many New Testament teachings and to the teachings of Jesus in particular.<sup>5</sup> The relationship between the teaching of Proverbs concerning reverence for God and obedience to parents is similar to that of the teachings of the Ten Commandments and Jesus' great commandments in that the primary commandment in each case deals with man's relationship to God.<sup>6</sup> Next in importance is his relationship

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1. Cf. Proverbs 1:4.
2. Cf. Proverbs Chapters 2-7, 10, 13.
3. Cf. Bridges, op. cit., pp. ix, x.  
Cf. W.T. Davison: The Wisdom-Literature of the Old Testament, Chapter 7.  
Cf. T.T. Perowne: The Proverbs, p. 33.  
Cf. A. Cohen: Proverbs, p. ix.
4. Cf. Proverbs 9:10.
5. Cf. Proverbs 4:23 - Matthew 15:19.  
Cf. Proverbs 2:6 - James 1:5.  
Cf. Proverbs 25:6, 7 - Luke 14:7-11.  
Cf. Proverbs 20:22; 24:29 - Romans 12:19, 20.  
Cf. Proverbs 10:19 - James 3:2.  
Cf. Wisdom of Proverbs - James 3:17.
6. Cf. Proverbs 1:7, 8.

with his fellowman, i.e., parents, in Proverbs. Juniors can be led to a sense of sin and the consequent need of a Savior through the portion of the book which deals with the contrast of the righteous and the wicked,<sup>1</sup> and by the verse, "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean; I am pure from sin!'" (20:9)

The absence of reference to Christ is an outstanding limitation of Proverbs for use with juniors; however, as has been pointed out in the discussion of the assets of the book, many of the teachings of Proverbs are closely related to the teachings of Christ and to other New Testament teachings. This relationship provides an opportunity to relate Proverbs to Christ and to the New Testament. The fact that the literary form is poetry rather than narrative limits Proverbs for juniors to some extent. There is little explicit reference to God's love or to prayer in Proverbs. There is also no teaching of immortality. Care will be necessary in selecting portions of Proverbs to use with juniors due to the lack of unity of the book.

In this chapter Proverbs will be studied in relation to the three present-day needs of junior children, (1) the need for security, (2) the need for dis-

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1. Cf. Proverbs Chapters 10-16.

cipline, and (3) the need to know God.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this study will be to discover what teachings of Proverbs are relevant to these needs.

The main source will be the Bible. Commentaries will be consulted to supplement the study. The Revised Standard Version and Moffatt's Translation of the Bible will be the two versions of the Bible used for study because the language of these two is most easily understood by children. All quotations will be taken from the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.

#### B. A Study of The Book of Proverbs

##### In Relation to

##### The Present-Day Needs of Junior Children

Bridges declares, "Of all knowledge, the knowledge of God is the principal."<sup>2</sup> In view of the basic importance of a vital knowledge of God, the need of junior children to know God will be considered first. The consideration of this need will be followed by the need for discipline and finally, the need for security.

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1. Due to limited span, a study of the general background of Proverbs will not be included here. Anyone teaching Proverbs should become acquainted with the general background of the book.
2. Cf. Bridges, op. cit., p. 3.

## 1. The Need to Know God

The key verse of Proverbs is, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." (1:7a)<sup>1</sup> Of help in understanding the full meaning of this verse and in pointing out its relation to the need to know God is the marginal note in the A.S.V., "The fear of the LORD is the chief part of knowledge" and Moffatt's translation of this verse, "Reverence for the Eternal is the first thing in knowledge." William Arnot maintains that "the fear of the LORD is the foundation upon which the superstructure of wisdom must be built."<sup>2</sup>

Wisdom has been defined as "the knowledge of those truths which lead to the knowledge of God."<sup>3</sup> In chapters one, eight, and nine particularly wisdom is personified as the Wisdom of God.

In approaching Proverbs in relation to juniors' need to know God, there are two points to be considered. These are "What can Proverbs contribute to the juniors' knowledge and understanding of the character of God?" and "Does this knowledge help the child in his relationship to God?"

In regard to a knowledge and understanding of the character of God, Proverbs reveals a relatively com-

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1. Cf. Proverbs 9:10.

2. Cf. William Arnot: Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth, p. 18.

3. Quoting Maimonides, Cohen, op. cit., p. 1.

plete picture of Him. Juniors are at the age when they can begin to understand the more abstract qualities of God's character.<sup>1</sup> They have a strong sense of justice<sup>2</sup> which enables them to learn to appreciate God's righteousness and His judgment as portrayed in these verses:

A good man obtains favor from the LORD, but a man of evil desires he condemns. A man is not established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will never be moved. (12:2,3)<sup>3</sup>

All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit. . . . Everyone who is arrogant is an abomination to the Lord; be assured, he will not go unpunished. (16:2,5)<sup>4</sup>

From Proverbs, juniors can learn something about God as Ordainer, Creator, and Sustainer of the Universe. These verses can be used: "The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; by his knowledge the deeps broke forth, and the clouds drop down dew." (3:19,20)<sup>5</sup> These verses also show God's great wisdom. That God is the source of wisdom is seen in these words, "For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." (2:6) Juniors can learn something of God's all-powerfulness

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1. Cf. Ernest Ligon: The Growth and Development of Christian Personality, (Chart).
2. Cf. Arnold Gesell and Frances L. Ilg: The Child from Five to Ten, p. 214.
3. Cf. Proverbs, Chapters 10-15.
4. Cf. Proverbs 3:11,12; 17:3; 20:30.
5. Cf. Proverbs 16:4; 20:24; 21:1; 30:24-28.

from the verse,

Who has ascended to heaven and come down?  
Who has gathered the wind in his fists?  
Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?  
Who has established all the ends of the earth?  
What is his name, and what is his son's name?  
Surely you know! (30:4)

This knowledge of God as Ordainer, Creator, and Sustainer of the universe and as an all-wise and all-powerful God can arouse juniors' admiration and respect for true greatness.<sup>1</sup>

A knowledge of God's mercy from these words, "Do not remove an ancient landmark or enter the fields of the fatherless; for their Redeemer is strong; he will plead their cause against you," (23:10,11)<sup>2</sup> and of His trustworthiness as portrayed thus, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart . . . In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths," (3:5,6)<sup>3</sup> can win juniors' confidence in Him. Knowing that God is present everywhere, as seen in the words, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good," (15:3)<sup>4</sup> can also add to juniors' confidence in Him.

In light of this teaching about the character of God, the three specific exhortations in Proverbs re-

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1. Cf. Ligon, op. cit.
2. Cf. Proverbs 22:22,23.
3. Cf. Proverbs 16:3; 18:10.
4. Cf. Proverbs 5:21.

garding man's relationship to God may be considered next very logically. These exhortations are applicable to the juniors' relationship to God as well and can strengthen and deepen it. They are exhortations to trust God,<sup>1</sup> to fear God,<sup>2</sup> and to accept the discipline of God or to obey God.<sup>3</sup>

The exhortation to fear God is of primary importance according to the key verse<sup>4</sup> and follows naturally the knowledge of God's character as portrayed in Proverbs. The expression "the fear of the LORD" is found frequently in the Bible and may have various shades of meaning depending upon the circumstances wherein it appears. Generally, however, it implies the proper heart attitude toward God, suggesting both reverence and love for Him.<sup>5</sup> Cohen declares that, "unless knowledge brings me to the reverence of God, it is futile and misleading."<sup>6</sup>

This God whose character commands fear can also be recognized by juniors as One worthy of their trust and confidence by virtue of the fact that He is merciful, trustworthy, and ever-present.<sup>7</sup>

A knowledge of God's righteousness and judgment<sup>8</sup>

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1. Cf. Proverbs 3:5.
2. Cf. Proverbs 3:7,8.
3. Cf. Proverbs 3:11,12.
4. Cf. Proverbs 1:7a.
5. Cf. Arnot, op. cit., p. 2.
6. Cohen, op. cit., p. 3.
7. Cf. Ante, p. 28.
8. Cf. Ante, p. 27.

can make juniors sense His authority as One who disciplines and as One who is to be obeyed. They are reminded by the figure of the earthly father in the exhortation to obey Him<sup>1</sup> that His discipline is a sign of His love.

The extent of these exhortations is revealed in the words "with all your hearts" (3:5a) and "in all your ways" (3:6a). A later exhortation to ". . . continue in the fear of the LORD all the day," (23:17b) further amplifies the idea that God is to be feared, and obeyed wholeheartedly, at all times and in all things.

## 2. The Need for Discipline

As the verse "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" is the key verse of Proverbs, discipline may be said to be a key word of the book. Cohen and Perowne say that the word "instruction" in Proverbs carries with it the sense of correction and might well be translated "discipline."<sup>2</sup> Trench asserts that "there can be no true instruction of man as he now is, without correction and discipline."<sup>3</sup>

Juniors can see the importance of their conduct from the verse, "Even a child makes himself known by his acts, whether what he does is pure and right," (20:11)

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1. Cf. Proverbs 3:11,12.
2. Cf. Perowne, op. cit., p. 40.  
Cf. Cohen, op. cit., p. 1.
3. Cohen quoting Trench, op. cit., p. 40.

and by the great emphasis of Proverbs upon conduct<sup>1</sup> and upon the contrasts of the righteous and the wicked.<sup>2</sup> Reference has already been made to the exhortation to obey the discipline of God and to the inclusiveness of this exhortation.<sup>3</sup> Some specific ways in which God should be obeyed, such as stewardship, charity, peaceful living, love, and influence upon others, are seen in the following verses:

Honor the Eternal with your wealth, and with the best of all you make . . . (3:9 Moffatt)

Never refuse to help your neighbor, when you can render it; never say to him, "Go, and come again, I will have it tomorrow for you" - when you have it beside you! (3:27,28 Moffatt)<sup>4</sup>

Never quarrel with a man for no reason, when he has never done you any harm. (3:30 Moffatt)

A friend loves at all times. . . (17:17)

The good man gives a lead to his neighbor, a bad man's life will lead him astray. (12:26 Moffatt)

In addition to Divine discipline, Proverbs also stresses parental discipline as found in this verse, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and reject not your mother's teaching" (1:8)<sup>5</sup> and self-discipline as expressed by these words, "He who is slow to anger is

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1. Cf. Proverbs Chapters 16-21.
2. Cf. Proverbs Chapters 10-15.
3. Cf. Anté, p. 30.
4. Cf. Proverbs 21:13.
5. Cf. Proverbs 6:20.

better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." (16:32)

It is significant to note that the first exhortation to heed parental discipline immediately follows the key verse of the book, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." Concerning this relationship Arnot contends that "love to parents ranks next under reverence to God."<sup>1</sup>

In view of the findings regarding the serious results of lack of parental discipline<sup>2</sup> and of Ligon's contention that the junior age is one of special conflict with parents, the teaching of Proverbs concerning parental discipline is especially pertinent.<sup>3</sup> Juniors can be helped to understand the importance and value of parental discipline from these verses:

For they (the disciplines of parents) will be a graceful garland for your head, as a necklace for your neck. (1:9 Moffatt)

Fix them ever in your mind, tie them fast round your neck; for their bidding will throw light upon your life, their direction will enlighten you, and to be trained thus is the way to live. (6:21,23 Moffatt)

A further emphasis upon the importance and value of parental discipline is found in these exhortations to parents themselves:

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1. Cf. Arnot, op. cit., p. 23.
2. Cf. Ante, p. 17.
3. Cf. Ligon, op. cit.

Train up a child in the way he should go,  
and when he is old he will not depart from  
it. (22:6)

The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a  
child left to himself brings shame to his  
mother. (29:15)

Cohen asserts that "the instruction of this Book, if put into practice, teaches how self-discipline may be exercised."<sup>1</sup> In addition to the teaching of Proverbs on control of the temper,<sup>2</sup> the book offers other relevant instructions in self-discipline. Control of the heart, the speech, the eyes, and the feet is taught in a way which could be presented effectively to juniors in these verses:

Keep your heart with all vigilance;  
for from it flow the springs of life.  
Put away from you crooked speech,  
and put devious talk far from you.  
Let your eyes look directly forward,  
and your gaze be straight before you.  
Take heed to the path of your feet,  
then all your ways will be sure.  
Do not swerve to the right or to the left;  
turn your foot away from evil. (4:23-27)

Proverbs contains many teachings which can help juniors develop a proper sense of values. They can learn that it is better to trust in God than in their own insight or in their riches.<sup>3</sup> Their own ways often seem all right in their eyes but they must learn that it is God

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1. Cohen, op. cit., p. 1.
2. Cf. Proverbs 16:32.
3. Cf. Proverbs 3:5; 11:28a.

who is the judge.<sup>1</sup>

Very pertinent in light of the prevalence of juvenile delinquency are these two verses dealing with the values of honesty: "Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble with it," (15:16) and "Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth shall be full of gravel." (20:17) The latter verse would be especially meaningful to juniors.

In this day of materialism it is important for juniors to learn that there are many values greater than money itself. They can learn this from such verses as, "Better get wisdom than gold, better choose knowledge than silver;" (16:16 Moffatt) "Reputation is a better choice than riches, esteem more than money. Rich and poor stand side by side: it was the Eternal who made them all." (22:1,2 Moffatt)

Juniors can learn to see that peace is better than strife,<sup>2</sup> that love is better than hate,<sup>3</sup> and that honesty is better than pride.<sup>4</sup>

Other areas of self-discipline taught in Proverbs are: diligence in labor, "He who is slack in his

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1. Cf. Proverbs 16:3 Moffatt.
2. Cf. Proverbs 15:18.
3. Cf. Proverbs 15:17 Moffatt.
4. Cf. Proverbs 16:19.

work is a brother to him who destroys," (18:9);<sup>1</sup> humility, "A man's pride will bring him love, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor," (29:23);<sup>2</sup> honesty, "Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who act faithfully are his delight," (12:22);<sup>3</sup> cheerfulness, "A cheerful heart is a good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones," (17:22); honor, "A gossiping fellow will betray secrets, but a trustworthy man will keep a confidence," (11:13 Moffatt); the choice of friends, "Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare." (22:24,25).<sup>4</sup>

W. T. Davison sums up the importance of discipline in his discussion of the disciplinary and instructional teachings of Proverbs. He maintains that although the disciplines advocated for children in Proverbs are considered old-fashioned by the modern world, they are the only alternative in the light of human nature. He advocates more moral education at a time when "authority is at a low ebb and discipline is becoming obsolete," and declares that "the first lesson of all which children . . . need to lay to heart is the absolute necessity of dis-

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1. Cf. Proverbs 6:6-11.
2. Cf. Proverbs 16:18,19.
3. Cf. Proverbs 11:1.
4. Cf. Proverbs 4:14,15.

cipline!"<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Need for Security.

That security results from the fulfillment of the need to know God and the need for discipline is readily seen in the teachings of Proverbs. The uncertainty of life in this world is expressed in these words, "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth." (27:1) Looney maintains that juniors need the security of something fixed and stable in a changing life and that this security is best found in an ever-growing knowledge of and faith in an unchanging God.<sup>2</sup> To add to their security, juniors also need definite practical guidance in living Christian lives in specific situations. This practical guidance and great emphasis on "righteous" and "wicked" can be found in the discipline teachings of Proverbs.<sup>4</sup>

Proverbs offers much that can supplement the juniors' knowledge of and faith in God.<sup>5</sup>

Juniors can get a sense of security from knowing God as Ordainer, Creator, and Sustainer of the Uni-

. . . . .

1. Cf. Davison, op. cit., pp. 166, 167.
2. Cf. Myrtle O. Looney: Guiding Junior Boys and Girls, pp. 20, 21.
3. Cf. Ibid.
4. Cf. Ante, pp. 30-35.
5. Cf. Ante, pp. 26-30.

verse,<sup>1</sup> as all-powerful,<sup>2</sup> as ever-present,<sup>3</sup> and as trustworthy<sup>4</sup> as He is portrayed in Proverbs. They can also learn from the statements of promise in Proverbs some of the results of whole-hearted trust in God: His direction of their lives, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths," (3:5,6); His furthering of plans and work, "Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established," (16:3); happiness, ". . . happy is he who trusts in the LORD," (16:20b); and safety from fear, "The fear of man is dangerous; but he who trusts in the Eternal shall be safe," (29:25 Moffatt). That reverence for God makes for wholeness of life is seen in these verses, ". . . revere the Eternal and draw back from sin: that will mean health for your body and fresh life for your frame," (3:7b,8 Moffatt) and "Reverence for the Eternal is the prolonging of life, but the years of evil men are shortened." (10:27 Moffatt)

The prosperity promised for honoring God with tithes and offering is a common Biblical teaching found in Proverbs. (3:9,10) Juniors can and should

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1. Cf. Ante, p. 27.
2. Cf. Ante, p. 27,28.
3. Cf. Ante, p. 28.
4. Cf. Ante, p. 28.

begin to practice simple stewardship and to experience its results. Through studies of the contrasts of the righteous and the wicked,<sup>1</sup> juniors can be made to see the consistent blessing resulting from a life of righteousness. As they can be led to live lives of righteousness themselves, they can experience this blessing and security in their own lives.

Juniors can learn from the teachings of 3:11,12 the likeness of God's love and discipline to that of their earthly father and can thus come to appreciate His love for them.

Obedience to parental discipline results in being in favor with God and man.<sup>2</sup> This teaching can help juniors see the security in following righteousness.

Of parental discipline it is said, "For their bidding will throw light upon your life, their directions will enlighten you, and to be trained thus is to live." (6:23 Moffatt) To be trained for life and to have guidance for life contributes to juniors' security today. Also juniors have the pleasure of being a joy to their parents, a sense of happy family relationship, when parents are obeyed.<sup>3</sup>

Juniors can learn the sense of satisfaction

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1. Cf. Proverbs, Chapters 10-21.
2. Cf. Proverbs 3:4.
3. Cf. Proverbs 10:1; 23:22-25.

and security that results from honest diligent labor.<sup>1</sup> They can learn that they will be respected for heeding discipline<sup>2</sup> and that their honesty is a delight to the LORD.<sup>3</sup>

It is not to be expected that juniors will recognize all of this resulting security as such in their lives but rather that they will experience it and manifest its presence in their every-day living.

### C. SUMMARY

Before approaching Proverbs in relation to the three specific present-day needs of junior children, a brief preliminary study of the book was made to discern general assets and limitations of Proverbs for juniors. Then the book was studied specifically in relation the the present-day needs of junior children, in the following order: (1) the need to know God, (2) the need for discipline, and (3) the need for security.

Regarding the need to know God, which coincides with the motto of the book (1:7a), Proverbs contains teachings that contribute to the juniors' knowledge and understanding of the character of God. From Proverbs

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1. Cf. Proverbs 14:23.
2. Cf. Proverbs 13:18.
3. Cf. Proverbs 12:22.

they can learn to know God as Ordainer, Creator, and Sustainer of the universe, as Judge, as a merciful God, as all-powerful, all-wise, and ever-present, as righteous, and as trustworthy.

From this knowledge of God, juniors can be led into a relationship of reverence, love, trust, and obedience to God.

Juniors can learn the importance of discipline from the verse, "Even a child is known by his acts, whether what he does is pure and right." (30:11) Proverbs teaches the junior about his obedience to God's discipline, to parental discipline, and about self-discipline.

In summary, Proverbs contains teaching material which, when presented effectively to juniors, can lead them to experience the results of knowing God and of having the proper relationship with Him. They can also experience the results of obeying the discipline of God and parents and of practicing self-discipline. From these experiences juniors can find the security so necessary for living in the world of today.

CHAPTER III  
SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE BOOK OF PROVERBS  
TO JUNIOR CHILDREN

CHAPTER III  
SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE BOOK OF PROVERBS  
TO JUNIOR CHILDREN

A. Introduction

Grace Storms asserts that the message of the Bible for juniors is that of the way of life, the power of God's presence, and the security of His love.<sup>1</sup> In light of the present-day needs of junior children discovered in the study of chapter one and of the values of Proverbs as found through the study of that book in chapter two, it may be said that Proverbs has a valuable contribution to the message of the Bible to juniors. Therefore, this chapter will present a suggested plan for teaching Proverbs to juniors.

In formulating this plan, the needs of juniors discovered in the first chapter, the relevant teaching values of Proverbs discovered in the second chapter, and principles of Christian education for junior children will be considered. The plan is an over-all one which could cover two weeks of Daily Vacation Bible School.

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1. Cf. Grace Storms: "Our Children and Our Bible," The International Journal of Religious Education, October 1952.

B. A Suggested Teaching Plan  
of Proverbs for Juniors

The title of this suggested plan, "Even a Junior ---" is taken from Proverbs 20:11, which might be considered the key verse of the unit plan. The unit is divided into two sub-sections, "Even a Junior is Known by What He Believes," including learning to know God and establishing a good relationship to Him, and "Even a Junior Is Known by What He Does," including obedience and self-discipline.

More Scripture and stories have been included than may be used. The use of all the Scripture by the teacher will provide her with a better background. Some of the stories are shorter than others and can be chosen as time permits.

It is suggested that both the Revised Standard Version and Moffatt's translation of the Bible be used.

"Even a Junior ---"

(Studies in the Book of Proverbs)

Objectives:

To strengthen the juniors' knowledge and understanding of God through a study of His character as portrayed in Proverbs.

To lead them, as a result of this additional

knowledge, into a relationship of wholehearted reverence, love, trust, and obedience to God.

To help them see that such a relationship with God should make a difference in the conduct of their everyday lives.

To make right conduct attractive and desirable to them.

To help them experience, and perhaps to recognize in part, the security that results from this relationship with God and from its influence in their daily lives.

To provide specific opportunities for some of these experiences.

#### Launching Session:

Launching questions leading to purposing and planning:

(1) What does God know about us?

Discussion might be opened by reading Proverbs 20:11 and substituting the word "junior" for "child." Continue by bringing out that juniors are important in the eyes of God and that He is as aware of all that they do as He is of adults. Try listing outstanding things done by junior age children. Then ask, "Does it make any difference how we live every day?" "What can we learn about living our daily lives that will help us be pleasing to

God?" Try to direct the conversation around the two sub-themes. The story, "It Happened in Okoyong,"<sup>1</sup> will help point up the relationship between knowing God and behavior. Try to lead the juniors to realize the importance of their daily lives in God's sight and of their consequent need to learn to live lives pleasing to Him.

(2) What do we know about God?

List facts known about God. Does what we know about God make any difference in our lives? How important is it to know about God and to know God? Read Proverbs 1:7a (Moffatt) and discuss briefly. What more can we learn about God that will help us live as He would want us to live? Where can we look? Direct their thinking towards the Bible as God's Word and to Proverbs in particular, as a book written in part, at least, for young people<sup>2</sup> and arouse their interest in seeing what Proverbs has to say to them. In the discussion of Proverbs 1:7a it is important to bring out the meaning of "fear" as being that of reverence and love. Moffatt is helpful in this situation.

Worship Center - Open Bible, candles or flowers

Scripture - Proverbs 20:11

Hymns - "Show Me What I Ought to Do"<sup>3</sup>

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1. Post, p. 46.
2. Cf. Proverbs 1:4b Moffatt
3. Hymns for Junior Worship, p. 80.

"O Worship the King"<sup>1</sup>

Story - "It Happened in Okoyong"<sup>2</sup>

Close with a prayer thanking God for His Word to tell us how to live and asking Him to guide us in our study together.

I. Even a Junior Is Known By What He Believes

1. Scripture: Proverbs 1:7; 2:6; 3:1-12,19,20; 4:23-27; 6:16-19; 14:26; 15:3,9,10; 16:1-9,20; 18:10; 20:11,12; 23:10,11; 29:25; 30:4,5,24-28.

Supplementary Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17; Psalms 19, 91, 100, 104, 147, 148; Matthew 22:35-39.

2. Worship Materials:

a. Prayer poem<sup>3</sup>

b. Poem "I Know Who Makes the Daisies"<sup>4</sup>

c. Call to worship

Wanting to know God better

Obeying His commands

Realizing His holiness and greatness

Seeking His will

Honoring His name

Inviting Him to control all our thoughts and actions

Praying and praising Him with all our hearts<sup>5</sup>

d. Selections of suggested Psalms used as calls to

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1. Ibid., p. 8.
2. Agnes Peery and Emily Werner: The Child and the Book, Book I, p. 42.
3. Charlotte Jones (ed.): Junior Worship Guide, p. 20.
4. Ibid., p. 251-252.
5. Bernice T. Cory & Others; The Junior Teacher, p. 13.

worship, responsive readings or as devotional reading to guide thoughts about God.

- e. Hymns: "All Things Bright and Beautiful"<sup>1</sup>  
"O Worship the King"<sup>2</sup>  
"God Cares for Me"<sup>3</sup>  
"The Lord Is Ever Near"<sup>4</sup>  
"Teach Us, Dear Lord, to Pray"<sup>5</sup>  
"God Speaks to Us"<sup>6</sup>  
"Show Me What I Ought to Do"<sup>7</sup>-Theme Hymn  
"God Who Touchest Earth with Beauty"<sup>8</sup>

- f. Pictures: "Come Unto Me" - Eugene Burnard  
"Christ the Welcome Guest" - Fritz von Uhde

3. Memory Work: Proverbs 3:5-12; 15:3,9; 20:11; 30:4,5.

- 4. Stories: "In the Presence of the King"<sup>9</sup>  
"Where Love Is, God Is"<sup>10</sup>  
"Creation Story" from Genesis 1 and 2  
"Polycarp, Serene Martyr"<sup>11</sup>  
"Getting Acquainted with His New Home"<sup>12</sup>  
"The Latchstring"<sup>13</sup>

#### 5. Part of Unifying Activities

Beginning to memorize some of the memory Scripture.  
Beginning to learn the hymns.

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1. Hymns for Primary Worship, p. 30.
2. Hymns for Junior Worship, p. 8.
3. Ibid., p. 73.
4. Ibid., p. 75.
5. Ibid., p. 77.
6. Ibid., p. 74.
7. Ibid., p. 80.
8. Youth Hymnal, p. 178.
9. Minor C. Miller(ed.): Adventures in Christian Living, Grade Four, p. 83.
10. Ibid., Grade Six, p. 115.
11. Alice A. Bays: Worship Services for Youth, p. 49.
12. Miller, op. cit., Grade Seven, p. 127.
13. Alice A. Bays: Worship Programs and Stories for Young People, p. 48.

Beginning to write a credo for juniors.  
Working on choral speaking of Psalms passages.  
Working on worship center materials - stained glass windows or wall hangings made with spatter paints or pressed crayon (might use nature designs or stars in heavens).

## 6. Other Possible Activities

Visiting some spot of natural beauty to heighten appreciation and wonder of God. (If this is not possible perhaps filmstrips or slides of the beauties and wonders of God's world could be shown) This visit might well be concluded with an outdoor worship service.

Illustrating one of the hymns such as "All Things Bright and Beautiful" with blueprints or pressed flowers and leaves.

Planning and participating in simple worship services.

Discussing and illustrating on frieze or by dramatization specific ways in which juniors can reverence, love, trust and obey God.

Examining such things as flies' wings or butterfly antennae under microscopes to heighten appreciation of God's handiwork.

## 7. Suggestions for Study

Study and discuss the character of God as found in Proverbs. Use the hymns and stories to bring out attributes of God not emphasized in Proverbs, such as His love. The hymn, "God Speaks to Us," and the story, "In the Presence of the King," are especially suitable. The creation story in Genesis could be used in the outdoor worship service. "Polycarp, Serene Martyr," "Getting Acquainted with His New Home," and "Where Love Is,

God Is" are good stories to use in sessions to point up the importance of knowing God. The emphasis on the importance of knowing God in the Ten Commandments and in Jesus' great commandments is also quite applicable here. Proverbs 30:4 provides an opportunity to introduce Jesus into the study as One who helps us know God better. The use of Jesus' great commandments is another good opportunity to relate Him to the study of God.

In the study of their relationship of reverence, love, trust, and obedience to God, juniors can get the scope of the relationship from an emphasis on "All" in Proverbs 3:5a, 6a and 23:17b. An interesting comparison can be made with the "alls" in Matthew 22:35-39. Help them to gain some appreciation of the results of such a relationship with God from the Scripture lessons and from the stories. As they grow in their relationship with Him, they can experience the security of these results in their own lives.

A discussion of worship as related to reverence, love, trust, and obedience to God could be based on the acrostic on worship. It is especially important in relation to the study of a knowledge of and a relationship to God that there be included in worship periods times to be silent before God, to think about His greatness, and to let Him speak to hearts. Help the juniors see that prayer is one way of getting to know God better and

is a part of trusting Him. Since there is little reference to prayer in Proverbs, the hymns "The Lord is Ever Near" and "Teach Us, Dear Lord, to Pray" can be used to bring in prayer.

## II Even a Junior Is Known by What He Does

1. Scripture: Proverbs 1:8,9; 3:9,27-32; 4:14,15,23-27; 6:6-11,16-19,23,27,28; 10:1,19,20; 11:13; 12:1,22; 13:11,18; 14:23; 15:1,13; 16:18,19,28,32; 17:17,22; 18:2,7,9,13; 20:9,11,17,22; 21:8,23; 22:24,25; 23:22-25; 25:6,7; 26:20; 29:23.

Supplementary Scripture: Proverbs 10-21; Matthew 5:38-41, 15:19; Luke 14:7-11; Romans 12:19,20; James 3.

### 2. Worship Material

- a. Psalms and Call to Worship of Part I.
- b. Prayer poems<sup>1</sup>
- c. Poem: "Which Loved Best?"<sup>2</sup>
- d. Hymns: "Take My Life and Let It Be"<sup>3</sup>  
"I Would Be True"<sup>4</sup>  
"We Give Thee But Thine Own"<sup>5</sup>

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1. Jones, op. cit., pp. 21, 43, 119, 120.
2. Joy Allison (May A. Cragin): "Which Loved Best?" in Matilda M. Elsea, Choice Poems for Elementary Grades.
3. Hymns for Junior Worship, p. 58.
4. Ibid., p. 62.
5. Ibid., p. 130.

"Now in the Day of Youth"<sup>1</sup>

3. Memory Work: Proverbs 10:19,20; 11:13; 12:22; 15:13;  
16:18-32; 17:17-22; 18:9.

4. Stories: "King Midas and the Golden Touch"<sup>2</sup>  
"A Share-Up Day"<sup>3</sup>  
"The Little Red Knife"<sup>4</sup>  
"Captive Maid and Naaman"<sup>5</sup>  
"Circus Pencils"<sup>6</sup>  
"Running the Race"<sup>7</sup>  
"Sir Valmar at Home"<sup>8</sup>  
"The Family Circle"<sup>9</sup>  
"A Lesson in Honor"<sup>10</sup>  
"Playing Fair in Ashtelot"<sup>11</sup>  
"A Clean Name"<sup>12</sup>  
"Purity Is Dearer than Life"<sup>13</sup>  
"Just a Little Thing"<sup>14</sup>  
"The Boy Who Was Fired"<sup>15</sup>  
"Smiling Is Contagious"<sup>16</sup>  
"Consequences"<sup>17</sup>  
"When Hans Obeyed"<sup>18</sup>  
"The Broken Plant"<sup>19</sup>

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1. Youth Hymnal, p. 169.
2. Charles Gayley: The Classic Myths in English Literature, p. 179.
3. Mary C. Odell: The Story Shop, p. 70.
4. Ibid., p. 43.
5. II Kings 5:1-15.
6. Alice R. Farmer: "Circus Pencils" in Lois Warner: The Teaching Values of Amos for Juniors, p. 76.
7. David Lotz: Running the Race, a typewritten story.
8. Miller, op. cit., p. 129.
9. Ibid., p. 132.
10. Ibid., p. 136.
11. Ibid., p. 139.
12. J.S. Stowell: More Story-Worship Programs for the Church School, p. 19.
13. Bays: Worship Programs and Stories for Young People, p. 215.
14. Peery and Werner, op. cit., p. 55.
15. A. Wallace: The Field of Honor and 99 Other Stories for Boys, p. 13.
16. Ibid., p. 73.
17. Hulda Niebuhr: Greatness Passing By, p. 10.
18. Jones, op. cit., p. 118.
19. Odell, op. cit., p. 74.

## 5. Part of Unifying Activities

Continuing those begun in Part I.  
Writing a litany for worship based on obedience in little things.

## 6. Other Possible Activities

Illustrating by a box movie or dramatization some of the contrasts in Proverbs which point up different kinds of behavior. (Choose from chapters 10-26 and work out in terms of present-day experiences of juniors).

Paraphrasing some of these same portions in juniors' language for today.

Begin a series of "secret experiments" in which the juniors try to practice what they learn about daily living such as honesty, cheerfulness, and control of temper, and report results later.

Planning and carrying out a simple service project.

Comparing some of the teachings of Proverbs with those of Jesus and others in the New Testament (see Supplementary Scripture)<sup>1</sup>.

Planning a special event such as the closing program for parents to show their honor and love for them.

## 7. Suggestions for Study

Obedience to God might be the means of transition from Part I to Part II. Specific ways in which He may be obeyed are in stewardship, charity, love, learning to get along with others, and by exerting a good influence on others. "Sir Valmar at Home" is a good story

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1. Ante, p. 50.

to teach getting along with others and "Running the Race" illustrates the results of exerting a good influence on others. Stewardship and charity might be considered together in connection with the service project suggested in the activities.

Obedience to parents might be introduced by the story, "When Hans Obeyed." The happy family relationships resulting from obedience to and respect for parents can be taught effectively from a study of the Scripture lessons and through the following stories: "Sir Valmar at Home," "The Family Circle," and possibly the story of the captive maid in II Kings 5:1-15. The latter story would have to be told from the standpoint of the little girl and her faithfulness to her parents' religious teachings. A good opportunity arises from the story "The Family Circle" to discuss family devotions and God's plan in the family. Suggestions for family devotions might be given to those juniors who expressed an interest or a desire for them. The story, "A Share-up Day" contains a good suggestion for a happy time in a family through sharing. Stories such as "A Lesson in Honor," "A Clean Name," "Purity Is Dearer than Life," "Smiling Is Contagious," and "The Boy Who Was Fired" are helpful in teaching the values of self-discipline.

The story of "King Midas and the Golden Touch" fits in well with the teaching of Proverbs concerning a

sense of values. A few of these teachings are found in 15:16,17; 20:17; and 22:1.

Consideration of the results of a righteous life as taught in Proverbs, such as satisfaction which comes from honest labor<sup>1</sup> and respect and honor which is gained from heeding discipline,<sup>2</sup> will serve to emphasize further the desirability of following such a life. The teacher should take every opportunity to guide the children's conduct in worship, work, and play.

Proverbs is rich in the teachings of contrast between righteous and wicked conduct.<sup>3</sup> The following stories help present the righteous life in an appealing way: "Playing Fair in Ashtelot," "Just a Little Thing," and "Circus Pencils". This study might be concluded by a discussion of Proverbs 20:9 in a simple dedication service at which time the children could be led to see the need of a Savior to help them in their daily living. A hymn such as "Take My Life and Let It Be" or "Now in the Days of Youth" could be used effectively.

### C. Summary

This chapter has presented a suggestion for

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1. Cf. Proverbs 14:23.
2. Cf. Proverbs 13:18.
3. Cf. Proverbs 10-21.

teaching Proverbs to juniors based upon their present-day needs as discovered in the study in chapter one and upon the values of Proverbs related to these needs as found in the study of Proverbs in chapter two. Principles of Christian education for junior children were also considered.

The teaching plan presented is for a two-week period of Daily Vacation Bible School. The plan was drawn up in terms of two units, each of which could cover a week.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The first step to determine what teaching values Proverbs contains for the present-day needs of junior children was to discover these needs. This was done through a study of present-day conditions and their effect on juniors. Authors consulted agreed that those conditions which exerted the greatest influence upon junior boys and girls were (1) changes in the home, (2) changes in the church, (3) changes in the school, (4) moral breakdown, and (5) war. The needs of juniors shown to be caused by the influences of these conditions can be summarized as (1) the need for security, (2) the need for discipline, and (3) the need to know God.

Next, a study of Proverbs was made in relation to these needs. This study disclosed first of all, some general assets and limitations of the book in its use with juniors. The fact that a part of the purpose of Proverbs is to provide instruction and discipline for the young makes the book especially useful for junior children. The stress on the conduct of everyday living in practical, concrete terms is another asset of the book. Contrary to first impressions, the teachings of Proverbs are on a high spiritual plane. The strong emphasis on right and wrong as brought out in the many contrasts between the righteous and the wicked can help juniors grow

in their judgment of right and wrong and in an appreciation of right living. They can also learn a sense of sin and of their need of a Savior from this emphasis.

Proverbs is limited for use with juniors in that it contains no specific reference to Christ. However, the close resemblance of many of the teachings of Proverbs to the teachings of Christ and to other New Testament teachings provides opportunity to introduce Christ. Since its literary form is poetry rather than narrative, care will have to be taken in the selection and use of portions of the book. There is little explicit reference to God's love or to prayer. The book has no teachings on immortality. The lack of definite unity of the book is another limitation.

A consideration of Proverbs in light of the present day needs of juniors revealed that the book contains valuable contributions relative to these needs. Concerning the need to know God, Proverbs gives as the primary requisite in knowledge the fear or reverence to God and contributes much to a knowledge of the character of God. Proverbs contains teachings which can help juniors establish a relationship of reverence, love, trust, and obedience to God.

Proverbs is rich in emphasis on obedience to discipline and on good conduct in daily life. Obedience to God, obedience to parents, and self-discipline are

brought out forcibly throughout the book.

Security resulting from knowing God and having a proper relationship with Him and from obedience to Divine and human disciplines can be taught to juniors from Proverbs. They can be led to experience this security in their own lives as they meet the above requirements of its existence.

Finally, a plan was suggested for teaching Proverbs to juniors. This plan was made on the basis of the needs discovered in the first chapter, of the teaching values of Proverbs related to these needs found in the study in the second chapter, and of principles of Christian education for juniors.

According to the findings of this thesis, the book of Proverbs contains teaching values which are relevant to the needs of junior children of today and which can be utilized effectively.

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