

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 6.26.2022

## WISDOM'S WORTH

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### **PROVERBS 2:1-22**

1 My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you,

2 making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;

3 yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding,

4 if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,

5 then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

6 For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

8 guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.

9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path;

10 for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

11 discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you,

12 delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted speech,

13 who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness,

14 who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil,

15 men whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways.

16 So you will be delivered from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words,

17 who forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God;

18 for her house sinks down to death, and her paths to the departed;

19 none who go to her come back, nor do they regain the paths of life.

20 So you will walk in the way of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous.

21 For the upright will inhabit the land, and those with integrity will remain in it,

22 but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.

## II. THE PROCESS OF WISDOM

- One of the most common metaphors we will find in Proverbs is that of the WAY or PATH.
- The path is a rich metaphor for our actions in life.
- A path is a direction with a starting point, where we currently are in life; a destination, where our path is taking us; and a fork in the road, a key moment of transition in life.
- The Father's lessons are meant to encourage the son to stay on the path of wisdom which leads to life.
- The lesson is a poem written in Hebrew that is a single complex sentence consisting of 22 verses, corresponding to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.
- The poem is divided into two parts each with 11 lines.
- In the first lesson and the wisdom interlude of Proverbs 1, we are entreated to pursue wisdom.
- Now in the second lesson, we will learn HOW to pursue wisdom in order to unlock wisdom's rewards.

### 1. WISDOM MUST BE PURSUED

- Wisdom is not our default setting.
- The journey of growing and developing in wisdom begins with revelation.
- Not just any revelation, but the specific words and commandments of the Father.
- The revelation is that the words and commandments of the Father are God's Words.
- That is the starting point of obtaining wisdom.
  
- What are we to do with these words?
- Look at the verbs used in v1-4 that instruct us on the method of getting wisdom.
- These verbs reveal to us that God grants wisdom by means of a process, not by automatic possession.
- To gain wisdom's treasure, to reap wisdom's rewards, will require effort and hard work.
- The first step to getting wisdom is to internalize God's Word.
- The son is told to explore and store up the Father's teachings so that they will work their way down into his heart.
- It is not mere intellectual pursuit but whole heart transformation of character.
  
- The exhortation in the conditional statements is pressed further.
- Solomon is telling his son to go on a treasure hunt for wisdom.
- He must dig down deep. Effort must be exerted.
- Because that treasure is God's Word and it's worth all of our effort.

### 2. WISDOM MUST BE TREASURED UP

- Do you treasure God's Word deep down in your heart?
- Are you actively in God's Word mining it for wisdom from God and letting it penetrate your heart?

- If you've ever lost something valuable and searched for it without giving up until you've found it, that must be the intensity we should have towards seeking wisdom in His Word.
- Your heart will follow what you treasure. Jesus said, "*Where your treasure is, that's where your heart is* (Matthew 6:21)."
- We will devote our time, energy, resources, to obtain what we deem valuable.
- **Psalm 119:72** The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.
- Look how the writer of Psalm 119 describes this internalization and storing up of God's Word.
- **Psalm 119:9-16** How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. 10 With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! 11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. 12 Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes! 13 With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth. 14 In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. 15 I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. 16 I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.
- The starting point is filling up our minds and hearts with God's Word.
- Do you actively memorize Scripture? Do you store up God's Word in your heart?
- All of God's people are to be Biblical scholars, gaining mastery of His Word.

### 3. WISDOM MUST BE CALLED OUT TO

- We need to prayerfully seek God's help as we study His Word and listen to the preaching of the Word.
- **Psalm 119:19** Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.
- **James 1:5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.
- Praying for wisdom positions our hearts to receive from God and to depend on God as the source of all true wisdom.
- Prayer prepares our heart to receive His Word.
- **Ephesians 1:16-18** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
- The Holy Spirit will give us understanding of the Scripture.
- The process of wisdom engages all of our senses; it involves the mind, the eyes, the heart, the mouth, and the ears.
- There is nothing passive about attaining wisdom. All of us are required to bring this about.
- It is worth our active pursuit to obtain wisdom.
- Will you pursue wisdom in this manner?
- If it is of inestimable worth then seek after it like it is!

## III. THE PRIZE OF WISDOM

### 1. WE WILL KNOW THE LORD

- IF the son is diligent to pursue wisdom, to treasure it up, to receive it down into his heart, THEN wisdom will give up her treasure.

- IF the conditions in v1-4 are met, you will enjoy the priceless blessings from wisdom that follow.

5 then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

6 For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

8 guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.

- The goal of gaining wisdom is not an academic or intellectual pursuit. It is a spiritual one.
- “Then you will understand the fear of the Lord.” This is shorthand for having a proper relationship with the Lord.
- The ultimate prize of wisdom is a personal, intimate, knowledge and fellowship with Him.
- Seek wisdom and you will know God. Know God and you will gain wisdom.
- If you seek wisdom, your reward is Jesus because wisdom is not a thing, it is a person!
- He is the supreme treasure!
- “*For the Lord gives wisdom.*” God is the source of wisdom.
- This sounds like a paradox. The Father instructs the son that getting wisdom depends on the son's pursuit of wisdom. We are also told that it is a divine gift.
- What is clear is that we must strive for wisdom, we must exert effort in obtaining wisdom, while simultaneously acknowledging that it remains a divine gift, and apart from God, we can never have it.
- There is no secular wisdom to be found in Proverbs.
- The wise man, the wise woman, knows that wisdom cannot be found within themselves.
- **Proverbs 28:26** Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.
- **Colossians 2:8** See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.
- The world's wisdom is subjective.
- God's wisdom is objective. He is all that is true. His wisdom is truth!
- Knowing the Lord will bring a quality of life and security that is not found apart from Him.
- "He stores up sound wisdom for the upright" You store up his Word, He stores up wisdom for you. He will dispense it to you as you walk in His ways. He will make known to you the excellencies and riches of Christ in whom are hidden all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
- He will be a shield to those who walk in integrity.
- He will safeguard us in the fierce spiritual battles that we all face in life.
- He shelters and protects those that are His.
- He will guard the paths of justice and watch over the way of his saints.
- Saints - means “*the faithful*”, those who have a “*loyal love to the God of Israel*” . This is only for those who have entered into this divine relationship with God through Christ.
- As the son stores up wisdom and treasures it in his heart, God will store up as a hidden treasure the protection inherent in that knowledge.

## 2. WE WILL BE TRANSFORMED

9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path;

10 for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

11 discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you,

- The entrance of wisdom into our hearts will change us from the inside out.
- We will understand righteousness, justice, equity, and the right way to live.
- We will make decisions that are right and just.
- We will have confidence that our choices are sound and that we will have success in what matters in life.
  
- We must experience an inner transformation.
- When we are born again, we are given a new heart. He changes our heart. He changes and reorients our affections.
- “Knowledge will be pleasant to your soul...”
- You will love God and you will love the wisdom and Word of God.
- You will find His word delightful, pleasant, beautiful.
- **Psalm 1:1-2** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.
- Our transformed heart gives us a growing desire for God’s wisdom, it gives us a new taste for the truth of God’s Word, and that is pleasing to our souls.
- Reading God’s Word becomes attractive to us, it is something we delight in.
- That transformation of heart repulses us to the idea of the way of folly and draws us to the way of wisdom.
  
- Wisdom will also give us discernment. We will have our senses trained to sniff out right from wrong, wisdom from folly.
- We will have an inner compass to discern the direction that will keep us on the right path.
- This again is why we must internalize God Word.
- **2 Timothy 3:14-15** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
- We want wisdom to become our way of thinking and our acquired taste.
- God produces that in us by His Spirit and we cultivate that through our continual intake and study of His Word and our exercising wisdom in all of life.

#### IV. THE PROTECTION OF WISDOM

- The other prize of wisdom is found in the second part of this poem, v12-22.
- Wisdom will protect us and deliver us.
- Wisdom prepares us to live in the real world with all of the threats and temptations that we will encounter along the way that seek to deter us from the right path.
- But protect us and deliver us from what exactly?

- Two specific groups are mentioned, two sets of voices that can pull you toward ruin and death.
- These are rival voices to the voice of the Father in the son's life.
- These are rival voices to the voice of God in our own lives.

## 1. PROTECTION FROM EVIL MEN

- The first group is found in v12-15—Evil men

12 delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted speech,

13 who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness,

14 who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil,

15 men whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways.

- Wisdom will keep you from getting mixed up with the wrong people.
- Here's what we're told about these evil men.
- They have perverted speech--speech that is twisted.
- These evil men call evil good and good evil.
- They rejoice in doing wickedness. They love what God hates.
- They operate in the dark, they are cut off from the moral light. Their methods are deception.
- These men are to be avoided because their ways are dark and crooked.
- That is the opposite of the bright and straight path of the Father.
- Wisdom wants to snatch us from those kinds of people.
- Bruce Waltke writes that knowledge and wisdom "*will tear him away from the dangerous moral power of the apostate's world-and-life view, which would lead him on the way of death from which he cannot escape on his own.*"
- These evil men offer rival lessons to the father's.
- The son needs wisdom to keep him from their perverse, twisted speech that can confuse him.
- We need this wisdom to protect us from all of the rival speeches of this world.
- The wise person will be repulsed by the values, character, and lifestyle of these evil men.

## 2. PROTECTION FROM THE FORBIDDEN WOMAN

- This is the first time we come across this woman. She is a major character in Proverbs and we will study her further in the coming weeks. The Father is going to warn the son many times about avoiding her.
- She is without a doubt, Solomon's main competition for his son's affection and attention.
- Later she is personified as Woman Folly, the archenemy of Lady Wisdom.

16 So you will be delivered from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words,

17 who forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God;

18 for her house sinks down to death, and her paths to the departed;

19 none who go to her come back, nor do they regain the paths of life.

- She is an adulteress.
  - She too has a specific speech pattern, hers is not the perverse speech of evil men, but smooth words.
  - That is seductive speech. Flattering talk. Flirtatious words.
  - This is sexual temptation. This will be a huge problem for the son, and of course, for all of us.
  - Wisdom can protect you from the immoral woman, from sexual temptation, from idolatry.
- How?—recognize her and see her in light of how God sees her.
  - Her methods—she makes herself appealing. She is luring you in. She is setting the bait.
- Her true character—we need to put on spiritual glasses to see her. Wisdom will teach and train you to be repulsed by her and her offer.
  - She is a covenant-breaker. She has broken her covenant with her husband, and she threatens your covenant with your spouse. She is out to wreck your family.
- Ultimately, Proverbs is telling us her disloyalty is towards God. She forgets the most important covenant.
  - All forms of sexual temptation are in view here, not just adultery but fornication, pornography, and immodesty.
- Her path—She is deadly. If you take her bait, you are trapped, and you will die.
  - Solomon paints a grim picture of the reality for the son if he is ensnared by this woman.
  - “Her house sinks to death” - every step towards this woman is a descent into death.
  - “None who go to her come back...” none who unite themselves to her, none who give in to the sexual temptation, can make their way back to the paths of life.
- But here’s how we avoid the forbidden woman.
  - When you see the adulteress as she really is, she is no longer a threat to you.
  - This is how wisdom protects you.
  - Don’t just pray for deliverance, gain the wisdom from God to see the immoral woman as God sees her.
  - Get the spiritual lens to see things from God’s perspective and you will be repulsed as you realize the true character and consequence of sexual seduction and temptation.

## CONCLUSION

20 So you will walk in the way of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous.

21 For the upright will inhabit the land, and those with integrity will remain in it,

22 but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.

- If you keep to wisdom, you will remain on the path of the righteous.
- There are no shortcuts to this.
- Get wisdom. It will protect you from these two rival voices to God’s Wisdom.
- Seek after wisdom and all of the treasures of God’s Word become available to you.
- The Wisdom of God makes us a new creation in Christ Jesus.

- Here is the proverb and the promise - you will inhabit the land and remain in it.
- The land is shorthand for all of God's covenant promises to His people.
- But we don't inherit a physical land - but an eternal one. The better land that is to come.
- Not the wicked, they will be cut off! They will be rooted out.
- Notice the parallelism. We'll possess the blessings and persevere in it--the wicked will be cut off and cast out.
- Wisdom in every way is better!
  
- **Christ is more beautiful than any other treasure you could hope to possess.**
- **The gospel sings a more beautiful song that captivates our heart.**
- **Seek Wisdom - which is Christ.**
- **He is the greatest treasure you can ever have.**