

## Sermon Notes

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 9.25.2022

## WISDOM AND CREATION

### I. INTRODUCTION

- **Psalm 104:24** O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.
- The Psalmist looks at the created world and can see the handiwork of an all Wise Creator.
- **Proverbs 3:19-20** The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; 20 by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.
  
- Last week we spoke of wisdom as a communicable attribute.
- A communicable attribute is an attribute that is true of God which he graciously shares with his image-bearers in some partial and limited way.
- Wisdom personified shares her attributes with those who value her.
  
- In our passage today, we will see the incommunicable attribute of Wisdom in the transcendent act of creation.
- God does not share this attribute with his image-bearers.
  
- Through this teaching you will see the wisdom of God in creation and what that says about wisdom and why we must follow in the ways of wisdom.
- The Wise Creator, who began your life, offers you eternal life. How you respond to his offer is a matter of life or death.

### Proverbs 22-36

22 "The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work,  
the first of his acts of old.

23 Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

24 When there were no depths I was brought forth,  
when there were no springs abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains had been shaped,  
before the hills, I was brought forth,

26 before he had made the earth with its fields,  
or the first of the dust of the world.

27 When he established the heavens, I was there;

when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,  
28 when he made firm the skies above,  
when he established the fountains of the deep,  
29 when he assigned to the sea its limit,  
so that the waters might not transgress his command,  
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,  
30 then I was beside him, like a master workman,  
and I was daily his delight,  
rejoicing before him always,  
31 rejoicing in his inhabited world  
and delighting in the children of man.  
32 “And now, O sons, listen to me:  
blessed are those who keep my ways.  
33 Hear instruction and be wise,  
and do not neglect it.  
34 Blessed is the one who listens to me,  
watching daily at my gates,  
waiting beside my doors.  
35 For whoever finds me finds life  
and obtains favor from the Lord,  
36 but he who fails to find me injures himself;  
all who hate me love death.”

## II. WISDOM'S ORIGIN

- Lady Wisdom stands for the father’s teaching, instruction, commands, and all of the spiritual inheritance that the father is passing on to his son.
- He wants his son to marry wisdom, love wisdom, treasure wisdom, and in doing so, he will find life.
- Chapter 8 is a highly imaginative and figurative poem where wisdom is giving a speech.

22 “The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work,  
the first of his acts of old.  
23 Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

- We must remember in studying this passage that this is poetry.
- There isn't really a divine-like figure called Lady Wisdom, who is separate from God.
- V22 wisdom states that she was the Lord's possession well before He even created the earth. What does that mean?
- We've been talking about wisdom in Proverbs as a type of Christ.
- The wisdom of Proverbs points us to the wisdom of God which is Christ, the fullest manifestation of the wisdom of God and wisdom from God.
- But the wisdom of Proverbs is not all of Christ, especially as we look at ch8
- So when we read here the Lord possessed wisdom, or brought wisdom into existence, he is not saying wisdom is a created being.
- We are not to extrapolate that to Christ and infer that He was a created being because He is wisdom.
- Examples of Christological heresies, Arianism / Jehovah's Witnesses
- Personified wisdom points to Christ. He is not a created being but revealed in Scripture as the one through whom all things were made.
- John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- Both his eternity and equality with God are stated, as well as, his role as the active agent in creation.
- Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.
- Everything exists by and for the glory, enjoyment, and pleasure of the unrivaled Son of God.
- Jesus is greater than personified wisdom because he is the real person that wisdom points to.
- So what is Solomon trying to convey about wisdom?

## **1. WISDOM'S BEGINNING WAS NOT WITH MAN**

- If wisdom stands for the father's teachings, by stating that wisdom existed before creation it invests the father's teaching with a patent of nobility tracing its antiquity before creation.
- Wisdom has priority in time and rank over the rest of creation.
- If she existed before man was made then she cannot be the result of man's accumulated knowledge.
- Wisdom's origin doesn't begin with man and man can claim no part in wisdom's existence or progression in human history.
- Because wisdom is possessed by God than she is as eternal as God himself.
- Wisdom transcends human knowledge.
- That is why wisdom must be listened to and followed.

## **2. WISDOM HAS CLAIM TO ULTIMATE AUTHORITY**

- Because wisdom was around and observed the creation from its very beginning, wisdom alone knows the whole story.
- She was there before God made anything, she was there while God was making everything, so wisdom alone has the comprehensive knowledge of all things.
- That's why wisdom is the skill mankind needs to live rightly; she knows how everything is supposed to work.
- Because she was around before anything, she can speak dogmatically and she can speak authoritatively.

- This makes wisdom the ultimate competent counselor. She must be listened to because she can be trusted to speak what is true and right.
- All of the other rival voices to wisdom are meaningless in the face of wisdom's origin.
- Wisdom was there before, during, and after creation.
- Who else can make that claim? Who else can equal the counsel that wisdom can bring?
- By presenting wisdom in close proximity to the Lord before Creation and present during the act of creation, Solomon is showing the intimate relationship wisdom has with the Lord. She knows the Lord. She is close to the Lord.
- Who else are you going to listen to?
- If you want to know the Lord, know wisdom!

### **3. WISDOM REVEALS THE ALL-WISE CREATOR**

- The magnitude of creation proclaims there is a great and powerful Creator to be feared.
- Romans 1:20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.
- Everything about creation proclaims its Creator; especially his eternal power.
- Through the general revelation found in creation, we know there is a God.
- Only a fool would look at the world and declare "there is no God!"
- So when Solomon writes, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom", he means wisdom's foundation is that the Lord is to be revered and worshipped because he is the all-powerful and all-wise Creator.
- If you don't recognize and acknowledge the Creator, you are a fool who despises wisdom and knowledge.

### **4. WISDOM EXTOLS GOD'S DESIGN AND ORDER IN CREATION**

- Solomon is also communicating how God's creative and wise decrees and work have given lasting structure and order to the cosmos.
- One need merely to observe our world, or look up to the heavens, to see the evidence of the great skill required to create everything in the cosmos.
- The evidence of the skill of the all-wise Creator is everywhere you look.
- God's creative work isn't like our creative work.
- From the very beginning, his work was guided by wisdom. He knew exactly what he was doing, he knew exactly what he wanted to see in the world he was forming, shaping, and filling.
- Things function according to the wise-design of the Grand Architect of the cosmos.
- Notice the metaphorical phrases in vv27-29 about the Lord's work in creation.
- There was nothing accidental in creation, God was actively involved and engaged in his creative work.
- At every stage God's wisdom determined what was to be made and how things were to proceed.
- All of these phrases signify that the Lord has established and ordained the fixed structure of the universe and all of creation.
- Humanity's existence is dependent on a firmly structured universe.
- We live in a fine-tuned universe by God's wise design.

- Solomon is showing his son that he can trust wisdom because God made the world in wisdom.
- He shouldn't live in fear because God has ordered the world to work according to his wisdom.
- The fixed created order also serves as a model for the fixed moral boundaries God has set for mankind.
- Just like the physical boundaries God has set for the seas, God has moral boundaries he has set so that society doesn't collapse into anarchy and full out evil.

## 5. WISDOM DELIGHTS IN THE CREATOR AND CREATION

- Wisdom praises, delights, and rejoices in the Creator and his creation.
- V30-31 Praise is at the center of this poem.
- Wisdom is delighting in the Lord and rejoicing in the Lord.
- Job 38:7 describes the angels worshiping and singing for joy at the dawn of creation.
- This is the response to wisdom in creation—worship and praise!
- This must be our response as well when we reflect upon the Creator and his creation.
  
- God's joy goes public in creation. God delighted in creating the world.
- In Genesis we see at the end of creation God declaring all that he made as 'good.'
- His work brought him incredible joy.
- Not because he didn't have joy before, but rather as an overflow of his own joy.
- God doesn't need anyone or anything to make him happy, joyful, fulfilled or satisfied.
- Acts 17:24-25 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.
- He created out of the overflow of his own joy!
  
- The object of wisdom's delight is the person on the street, in the market, at the city gates, who can be the recipient of her knowledge.
- Because she delights in them, she appeals to them to share in her life.

## III. FIND WISDOM FIND LIFE

- Vv32-36 contains the final invitation and warning in the father's lessons to the son.
- But there is a shift. In the previous lessons it was the father asking the son to follow wisdom and marry wisdom, now it is wisdom making a direct appeal commanding the son to find her and listen to her.

32 "And now, O sons, listen to me:

blessed are those who keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction and be wise,

and do not neglect it.

34 Blessed is the one who listens to me,

watching daily at my gates,

waiting beside my doors.

- Before she was at the city gates and marketplace addressing the masses and now she is the owner of a house addressing the sons to maintain daily vigilance at her door.
- When wisdom opens the door they must not miss the unique opportunity to gain admission into wisdom's house.
  
- V35 seems to adapt the promise found in Proverbs 18:22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.
- Only here finding goodness and obtaining favor from the Lord is in finding wisdom.
- The one who finds her is the one who seeks her diligently.
- The one who doesn't miss the opportunity to be invited into wisdom's house, will obtain the most precious prize of all—eternal life.
- Find wisdom, find life.
  
- But there are high stakes to finding wisdom or missing wisdom.
- It's a matter of life and death.
- The one who is vigilant finds wisdom and therefore finds life.
- The one who is not vigilant fails to find wisdom and therefore finds death.
- In fact, the person who is not vigilant proves to actually hate wisdom and love death.
  
- If God through wisdom made everything and has given you life, you owe everything to the Creator to follow in wisdom's way where he holds out the promise of eternal life for all those who love him

## CONCLUSION

- How do we respond to the wisdom of God, especially the wisdom displayed in creation?
- We must respond with adoration and praise.
- Romans 11:33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
- When we see the Son of God, the incarnation of the Word and Wisdom of God, we should bow in worship, adoration, and praise.
  
- Nowhere is the wisdom of God more clearly displayed than in the cross of Christ.
- The foolishness of God is shown to be infinitely wiser than man and the weakness of God is shown to be infinitely stronger than man.
  
- 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."
- Christ the wisdom from God is our only hope and boast!