

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 10.2.2022

A TALE OF TWO FEASTS

I. INTRODUCTION

- God's Word is filled with example after example of a choice set before God's people.
- Deut. 30; Joshua 24; 1 Kings 18
- The choice was obvious, they would want to choose life and good and blessings and length of days and the good life in the promised land by obeying God.
- But we know it isn't that easy. The right choice is obvious but we don't always make it.
- Our sinful and depraved hearts go after our wicked lusts and desires.

- As we've studied Solomon's lessons to his son in the prologue of Proverbs, we've seen this choice presented time and time again.
- The two competing ways of living, wisdom or folly.
- Solomon is teaching his son to make the wise choice.
- The answer seems obvious—choose wisdom, choose the Lord.
- And this final chapter of the prologue will summarize all of that in story form.
- A choice must be made—there is no middle way or third option.
- It's a tale of two invitations to a feast that the wise and simple will receive, and a decision must be made as to which feast to attend.
- Which one will you choose?

Proverbs 9:1-18

1 Wisdom has built her house;

she has hewn her seven pillars.

2 She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine;

she has also set her table.

3 She has sent out her young women to call

from the highest places in the town,

4 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"

To him who lacks sense she says,

5 "Come, eat of my bread

and drink of the wine I have mixed.

6 Leave your simple ways, and live,

and walk in the way of insight.”

7 Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse,
and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury.

8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;
reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;
teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

11 For by me your days will be multiplied,
and years will be added to your life.

12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself;
if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

13 The woman Folly is loud;
she is seductive and knows nothing.

14 She sits at the door of her house;
she takes a seat on the highest places of the town,

15 calling to those who pass by,
who are going straight on their way,

16 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”
And to him who lacks sense she says,

17 “Stolen water is sweet,
and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”

18 But he does not know that the dead are there,
that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION

- Solomon, these first nine chapters are presenting wisdom as the most excellent and wise choice.
- In this fascinating piece of Hebrew poetry in ch9, Solomon casts Lady Wisdom as that excellent hostess throwing the fantastic dinner engagement whom everyone should want to attend.
- Solomon presents Woman Folly as the terrible hostess whom everyone should want to avoid.
- Wisdom’s invitation is a parallel to the gospel call.

- Wisdom in Proverbs continually points us to Christ, the sum of all of wisdom and knowledge.

WISDOM'S PREPARATION

- Lady Wisdom is the personification of Solomon's wisdom and the Lord's wisdom.
 - Note in vv 1-2 how wisdom prepares for her guests.
 - She has built her house—She has built a large house with the necessary accommodations for those she is inviting.
 - Seven pillars -number of perfection/completeness, she has plenty of room in her perfect house.
 - What wisdom builds is worthy of admiration. She has industry and skill.
 - She slaughters her beasts—she is preparing a feast with the choicest meats.
 - Wisdom, out of her own wealth, is making a significant investment in feeding her guests.
 - She has mixed her wine—not watering it down but adding spices or honey to make it better and more potent.
 - She is generous and thoughtful. She has her guests in mind.
 - She has also set her table—she is diligent in her preparations.
 - Wisdom is an extraordinary woman. She is the queen of hospitality. What an honor to dine at wisdom's house.
- Everything Solomon has taught his son thus far has presented wisdom in the most excellent of ways, she has a table spread before those who seek her and love her.
 - She offers the choicest of delicacies to satisfy us in every area of life.
 - Because wisdom points us to Christ we can see Christ's generosity and preparation in what he extends to us in salvation and life through him.
 - He prepares a spiritual feast for us. He thought of everything we need and has provided for it in full.
 - He satisfies us in every area of life.

WISDOM'S MESSENGERS AND MESSAGE

- Everything is ready so wisdom sends out her messengers to extend the invitation.
 - They will go out under wisdom's authority and wisdom's behalf to call from the highest places for the simple to come to her feast.
 - This is the invitation that cannot be missed. It should not be refused.
 - It is extended to "whoever is simple and lacks sense". The simple are the uncommitted, the ignorant, the inexperienced.
 - They are invited to come dine with wisdom.
 - The message is for them to "turn in here"—to turn into wisdom's house.
 - Another word for 'turn' is repent. They are to turn from their simple ways and turn to wisdom's way and they will live and walk in the way of insight.
 - If the simple turn to wisdom, they will no longer be ignorant or spiritually blind. Their eyes will be opened and they will enjoy all of the blessings of wisdom.
- This is exactly what the gospel call is like. An invitation to come to Christ and feast with him.
 - **Isaiah 55:1-2** "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which

does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

- **Luke 14:16-24** But he said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. 17 And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ 18 But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.’ 19 And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.’ 20 And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ 21 So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ 22 And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ 23 And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’”

- There are several parallels with wisdom’s invitation.
- We have been invited to a great feast prepared from before the foundation of the world.
- Don’t make excuses when the gospel call comes to you—like the call of wisdom—one must receive the invitation and turn to Christ.
- And when you turn to Christ, you will have what wisdom promises—you will have eternal life!

- And this gospel call must go out and guess who the messengers are?
- It’s us! We are sent out into the world to invite many to come to our Lord’s feast!
- It’s interesting the way v3 is grammatically structured that even though the young women are sent out to make the call, it is actually wisdom doing the calling. It’s Lady Wisdom speaking through them.
- It is a great picture of what we do today. When we are declaring the gospel, when we are preaching the good news, people are hearing the Word of God as if it was coming from God himself.
- It is God speaking through us.
- **1 Thess. 2:13** And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.
- That is the confidence we should have when we call men and women to follow Christ.
- We get to call people to the greatest feast ever imagined.
- The great feast God has prepared for whoever will come to Christ.
- Will you be one of his messengers?

III. FOLLY'S INVITATION

- We’ll see some similarities between her invitation and Lady Wisdom’s.
- Woman Folly is the power behind the forbidden woman we have looked at several times.
- Woman Folly is a counterfeit to Lady Wisdom.

FOLLY’S PREPARATION

- Folly has a house but nothing is said about it here.
- In contrast to the industry and activity of Lady Wisdom in building a house, preparing the feast, sending out her maidservants to call out for

the guests to come, Woman Folly pompously sits at the door of her house.

- She's lazy. She doesn't prepare her feast with her guests in mind.
- She's loud—she's brash and brazen.
- She's seductive—she uses enticing words to draw the simple in.
- She knows nothing—means she lacks any will or resolve to leave her ignorant and foolish ways. She has no fear of the Lord.
- In this last stanza about Woman Folly, there is an inclusio. An inclusio are two terms that bookend a section, they are the main point and everything between those two outside terms defines, supports, or expands upon those two terms.
- In this case, we see Woman Folly knows nothing in v13 and the simple, who turn to Woman Folly, also do not know their end, in v18.
- It is folly from beginning to end.
- Solomon is making the point that it is really a no-brainer which feast his son should attend.
- Sadly, many choose Folly's feast.

FOLLY'S MESSAGE

- Woman Folly also invites people to her house. But she's not sending out messengers. Lady Wisdom sends out her messengers to the highest places to invite the simple.
- Woman Folly takes a seat on the highest places of the town.
- Literally means, "takes a throne" on the highest places.
- She takes for herself a position of influence and authority.
- Sitting is a posture of authority that teachers would take when they would instruct their disciples.
- Woman Folly wants to tell you how to live your life, she wants to give counsel. But she's a terrible teacher.
- Wisdom's messengers come with a higher authority but Folly listens to her own usurped authority.

- She calls to those who pass by, who are going straight on their way.
- Folly distracts those who have no intention of turning to her house.
- They are on the straight path, meaning they were not originally looking to stray on to folly's doorstep.
- She uses seductive words to persuade them off the straight path and lures them into her fatal feast.

- Folly's call to the simple sounds just like wisdom's call.
- She uses the same words. The simple, because of their ignorance, give equal weight to wisdom and folly.
- Again, we need to know God's Word so we can discern the truth from error.
- The writer of Hebrews rebukes his readers because they should have grown in wisdom and knowledge of God's Word.
- Hebrews 5:11-14 And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

- Like Lady Wisdom, Woman Folly calls them to also turn into her house for her feast.
- Her message is the anti-gospel.
- Her message is to turn from the straight path and turn to her path with false promises that her food is sweet and can satisfy.
- She makes herself look good, she lures in with seductive words that appeal to our flesh.
- Her crude invitation is enough to lure in her prey.

- She says, “Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”
- Her meal is bread and water, a far cry from Wisdom’s lavish spread.
- But here is her enticement, to drink and taste from what is forbidden and censored, to partake of what is secret and hidden.
- “Stolen water” is a euphemism for sexual pleasure.
- Woman Folly entices the simple to partake in what she has stolen from what rightfully belongs to her spouse.
- Her feast is sensual and carnal pleasures that are pleasant for a moment but provide no lasting satisfaction.

- She entices the gullible to secret sin. To eat bread in secret.
- Proverbs 20:17 Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth will be full of gravel.
- Our secret sins seem pleasant in the moment but inevitably leave us feeling like we’re chewing a mouth full of gravel.
- Nothing we do is done in secret. Our secret sins are not secret to the Lord.
- They are exposed before his penetrating gaze, so it is better to repent and turn to Christ.
- There is no life feasting in Folly’s house.

- Folly’s feast is a fatal one.
- The gullible does not know that he is dining with the dead.
- The fool doesn’t consider the consequences of their actions before they take them.
- If the simple turn to her they will die.
- Solomon paints the choice to turn into Woman Folly’s house as grim as possible.
- All of her guests end up in the same destination—the depths of Hell!

IV. THE WISE CHOICE

- These two invitations are extended to everyone.
- These are the only two choices. There is no third option.
- If you don’t choose wisdom, you’ve already chosen folly.

- The middle section of this poem provides the application and conclusion for these two invitations.
- What is written teaches us what we need to know for how to read the rest of Proverbs.
- Here is the lesson--Don’t correct a scoffer, don’t reprove a wicked man, don’t reprove a scoffer because when you do you will get abuse, they will injure you, and they will hate you.
- Who is the scoffer?
- The scoffer is the unteachable, untrainable, uncorrectable fool.
- They will not listen to wisdom. They will not listen to wise counsel.
- Don’t waste your time trying to correct them.
- All you will get are verbal threats and you’ll be humiliated.

- But in contrast to the scoffer, you can reprove a wise man, give instruction to a wise man, and teach a righteous man because they will grow wiser, increase in learning, and they will love you.
- A wise man is humble enough to know they need to continually grow in wisdom, will always need instruction, and knows they will need correction.

- Wisdom is the discernment to know who to correct and who not to correct.

- How will you know the difference? By how the correction will be received.
- The scoffer will punish you if you try to correct them.
- And here is a point of self-analysis, if you are the kind of person that cannot accept correction, if you're not teachable, then you are a scoffer. If you get angry at the person who tries to correct you, you're a scoffer.
- To accept correction is a mark of the wise person.
- How do you take correction?
- The wise person can humbly accept correction because they know they still have a long way to go.
- And they will love the person who had the courage to confront them.
- How do you respond to confrontation?
- Wisdom is the ability to hear and respond correctly to criticism so that you don't repeat the same mistakes.
- The wise and humble person will listen to what they are confronted with to try to see the truth in it.
- None of us like to be corrected and confronted. It's unpleasant. But if the Spirit of God is in us and He is working in us then we humbly receive it and are thankful because the Lord uses it to discipline us.

- The rest of the collections of Proverbs are going to give us wisdom for various aspects of life.
- How are you going to receive them?
- Will you be teachable?
- Will you receive the correction?
- Will you allow God's Word to confront you, instruct you, and reprove you?

- V10 is the literary center of this poem.
- The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight
- It is the purpose statement and theme of Proverbs that we saw back in ch1.
- It's the starting point, the foundation of getting wisdom, do you fear the Lord?
- Are you in a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ?
- You cannot be wise without that relationship.
- This is the last time Wisdom speaks in Proverbs. She urges you to come to her feast. To choose wisdom. If you choose her, you are choosing life.
- How you live will reveal if you accepted her invitation.
- If you are wise, you will continue to grow in wisdom.
- If you are a fool and scoffer, you will one day stand before God alone to give account of your life.