

Wisdom's Call and Warning

Proverbs 1:20-33

2/4/26

Review:

We established a good intro to the book of Proverbs a few weeks ago, learning about the author and how he came about to obtain the wisdom he did in order to record such a wisdom-filled book. Our takeaway was to love (God), remember (God), and ask (God).

We also covered the first few verses of the book that give us the reason we as believers should read, live, and teach the Proverbs.

A couple weeks ago we dove in to the first instruction, and that was to listen to the wisdom of your mother and father and do not be enticed by sinners.

Today we will see the “call of wisdom” or the “warning of wisdom”. Wisdom in this section is given a human appearance and is spoken of in the first person point of view. May we all listen to what she has to say and embrace it whole-heartily.

Read Proverbs 1:20-33

(vs. 20-21) Where is she?

These first two verses introduce Lady Wisdom. The narrator makes a point that she is not hard to find. In fact she is yelling out in the streets and at the city gates, and even in the market she can be heard. It's made clear that she is not hiding from us who wish to find her.

This gives us an interesting thought to ponder - consider for a moment the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve had no sin or shame they were out and about, freely roaming in the presence of God. When they sinned something changed. Even before God came to find them they knew they had shame, they thought they had something to hide and they hid. Wisdom, in our passages today, has no shame, nothing to hide, and no motive to be kept secret. She is public and proudly roams for people to see her. She is pure.

Some other places we find wisdom as laid out in Scripture:

Christ Himself

Colossians 2:3

“[Christ Himself], in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

Fear of the Lord

Job 28:28

“and to man He said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.’”

The Bible

1 Timothy 3:15

"and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Wise Counsel

Proverbs 13:20

“He who walks with wise men will be wise,
But the companion of fools will suffer harm.”

Think of a time you found wisdom. Who was it that spoke those life giving words to you? What passage of Scripture stood out in a time of need?

Personally for me, it sometimes starts in nature. Seeing the awesome works of God’s mighty hand so often brings me back to my knees in reverent fear. And as we know, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

(vs. 22) “How long?”, she asks.

Lady Wisdom now speaks, and she starts with a question. Almost sounding frustrated with man, “How long will you people be so dumb? How long will you find joy in foolishness?” (Lindsey’s paraphrase)

We know from the first two verses that wisdom is not hard to find, so we can conclude that her annoyance with “the simple” is not unwarranted. After all, she’s shown herself to them and they’ve actively chosen against her. She goes so far as to say “fools hate knowledge”. Not only do they reject it, they don’t even like it.

It’s important to remember, though we are saved and God is renewing our hearts, we can still fall victim to choosing foolishness. Perhaps wisdom comes to you in the form of rebuke. Are you tempted to “hate knowledge” in that moment? Do we try to be defensive and deny our shame, rather than acknowledge it in wisdom and repentance?

(vs. 23-27) The scary bit - her warning to those who have ignored her.

Wisdom is seen so clearly obvious again. She says she poured out her spirit and has made her words known. There is no excuse for the fool who ignores her. There is no room to plead ignorance or claim any innocence. Foolish living is deliberate and a chosen life made by those who desire their own wisdom over the wisdom of God. They have made themselves out to be god of their own lives and have actively rejected their true Creator. The judgment of this decision will come as Wisdom continues to warn.

The idea of storing up judgment for yourself is seen first. As in **Romans 2:5** “But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” those who do not listen to God’s law bring guilt and wrath upon themselves. Calamity will come and terror will strike, and God’s wisdom will be too far gone. The idea of “I will come to God later” or “I have more life ahead of me so I have time to repent” is a dangerous and faulty game to play. Wisdom says to this person, “I will laugh at you when your deserved destruction comes.” Ouch.

It is interesting that we haven’t left the very first chapter of the book on wisdom and we are told the massive penalty for not pursuing wisdom. It’s like an inn keeper in a storm saying, “Hurry! Come inside! Stay here and I will protect you from the elements.” Choosing to not read on or reject

biblical wisdom comes with severe consequences, and ultimately those who choose to quiet wisdom have chosen eternal destruction.

(vs. 28-31) Just in these verses we've covered so far, we've seen wisdom offer a few things: knowledge in verse 22, reproof in verse 24, and counsel in verse 25. These are laid out again in verses 29 and 30 as things which have been rejected by the sinner.

The ultimate source of sadness and anguish will come when they finally call out to the Lord or to Wisdom and He does not answer. He says He will not be found. We can understand this denial in two ways. One being on judgement day, when a person stands before God and gives an account for their life, God will say "depart from me, I never knew you" (Matthew 7:23). This one is simple since we know after death there is no hope or turning back to make different choices in your life.

However, the second one is a little trickier but none the less biblical and true. This is when God gives one over to their sin and closes the door to salvation while they still live. One physical example we see in scripture is in 1 Samuel 8:18. The people had chosen their earthly king and rejected God as their leader. God warns the people here by saying, "And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you in that day." God draws His line with a strict warning to the people who reject Him as their Lord.

The spiritual example we see in scripture is in Romans 1:28-29. "And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice."

Though it is not for us to know who has been given over and who has not, we can know that it is a righteous judgment from God, the sovereign one who wishes to see none perish. God ultimately knows the heart of man perfectly and will never turn away or shut out one whom He has ultimately called to be His child.

2 Peter 3:9

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

1 Chronicles 28:9

“And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever.”

Jeremiah 17:10

“I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.”

John 6:37

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.”

Since we do not know the heart of man, we should be just as eager to share the gospel and be a Christ-like example to every soul God puts in our path. This is our mandate as believers, that we would tell the whole world, not just those we think have a chance.

Have you ever been tempted to not share the gospel with someone or give up on a family member because you felt like it was a “lost cause”? Be encouraged and convicted! Keep on the good work and be faithful to this person. Remember God alone holds their heart and loves them more than we can.

The last part of this section is the “therefore” statement. After the sinner continually rejects the wisdom that has been calling after them, it is said that they will reap what they have sown. They will “eat the fruit of their way” and have the reward of a life lived in scoffing and self-worship.

(vs. 32-33) The closing of this chapter contains a brief summary with two general points.

1. The simple or foolish are destroyed by their own choices.
2. The Godly listener and one who heeds Wisdom's call will be saved to a secure dwelling where no disaster can come to them.

Which of these are you choosing today?

Remember, even as saved and secure believers, we still have the daily choice to choose wisdom or foolishness. How do you begin each day ready to pursue wisdom with the motivation that is our salvation?

As we face a world of lost souls, we must remember who we once were before coming to the Lord. Do you humbly remember your place and your participation in your own salvation? How does this motivate you to share God's Wisdom with the foolish world around you with love and gentleness?

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

We, too, were the fool headed for destruction the writer talks about. Praise the Lord for His work in your life and pray eagerly for wisdom to take its full effect.