

Proverbs – Wisdom That Works - Part 12

Decision Time – Proverbs 9:1-18

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – Aug. 29th, 2021

Intro:

- This morning we come to the end of our series as we come to the end of the opening speeches in the book of Proverbs. In this chapter, you are given two identical invitations, one to dine with lady wisdom and join her in her house, and the other is to dine with lady folly and join her in her house. You must decide as to which way you will turn and which door you will open.
- Our good heavenly Father has been urging us in conversation after conversation to listen to Him and treasure what He has to say. However, there is a day and a season that every parent and every child must face when they must strike out on their own and make their way in the world. Will they listen to what you told them and follow the example you have set, or will they choose different paths than those that have been advised to them?
- Every person must decide, and you must decide, which pathway you will follow and which invitation you will accept. The paths you choose and the doors you open matter, and they will either lead to life and what is good, or lead to death and what destroys. It is always better for us to “learn and live” versus “live and learn” Each one of our choices matters, with real benefits and real consequences. So listen attentively, search diligently, examine closely, choose wisely. Here is your first invitation, and this is the one that God desires for you to receive.

Receive wisdom's invitation

Proverbs 9:1-6

Wisdom has built her house; she has set up its seven pillars. 2 She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has also set her table. 3 She has sent out her servants, and she calls from the highest point of the city, 4 “Let all who are simple come to my house!” To those who have no sense she says, 5 “Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. 6 Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of insight.”

- I want you to notice a couple of things about lady wisdom. First, she is a worker. Wisdom works. She has “built her house,” “set up” its pillars, “prepared her meat and mixed her wine,” “set her table,” “sent out” her servants, and “calls” from the highest point in the city. All of her actions take time and forethought.

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- Second, the reason lady wisdom works and prepares is so she can continually bless and benefit others. The end goal is not to exult herself, but to help others . . . and what she has to offer is good and of value.
- In order for us to participate, first, we have to hear her call, know that there is wisdom available to us, and hear her voice above all the noise around us. Second, we must leave our simple ways, stop making choices based upon how we feel and what is easy or familiar. Third, we have to choose to walk in the way of insight—look for the good path to take, and then take it . . . which will require work, effort, and trust.
- Sandwiched between our invitation to join lady wisdom and our invitation to join lady follow, is a description of the characteristics of two types of people that we can choose to be. One is the mocker, and the other is the wise.

Choose your character

Proverbs 9:7-9

Whoever corrects a mocker invites insults; whoever rebukes the wicked incurs abuse. 8 Do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you; rebuke the wise and they will love you. 9 Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.

- The primary difference between someone who is a mocker and someone who is wise is how they respond to correction and instruction.
- When the mocker is corrected, they respond by insulting the one who corrects them. When the mocker (who is a wicked person) is rebuked, they abuse the person who rebukes them. When the mocker is rebuked, they will hate the person who rebukes them. These people will not receive wisdom, and it is a mistake to even try to correct them. Choose what you say not by what is said, but by who said it.
- When the wise are rebuked, they will love you for doing so. If you instruct the wise person, they will become even wiser. When you teach the righteous, they will learn and add to their learning.

- How do you handle correction, instruction, and rebuke? How you handle it tells you who you are. How can you become wise? This is your path forward:

Proverbs 9:10

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

- Fear the Lord. Know that you are not the center of the universe. Know that there is one greater and higher and infinitely better than you. Know that you will give an account to an all-knowing and all-powerful God. Jesus told us not to fear people, because the worst they can do to you is kill you, but to fear the one who has the authority to cast you into hell. Jesus told us to fear Him (Luke 12:4-5). The way of wisdom starts at the gate of the fear of the Lord. If your wisdom does not originate here, it is not wisdom at all, but folly.

1 Cor 3:18-19 ESV

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their craftiness.”

- Gain knowledge of God, knowledge of the Holy one. That knowledge indeed gives you understanding. If you want to know what is happening in the world and what is happening in your life, then gain wisdom by understanding God, who He is, what He values, what He does, and what His plan is. You can understand much by understanding Him, and then you can see what He is doing, which gives you more understanding, which provides hope and encouragement so that you can endure. Wisdom will reward you.

Proverbs 9:11-12

For through wisdom your days will be many, and years will be added to your life. 12 If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer.

- Wisdom will give you life, to your mind, to your emotions, to your body, to your soul. A joyful heart is good medicine (Proverbs 17:22). Wisdom will reward you, both in this life and the life to come.
- However, to tie it back together in contrast, the reward for a mocker, those who think they know everything and are better than everyone, is suffering.
- We come to our second invitation, the invitation of folly, and what she has to offer, and by observation, we are to resist this invitation.

Resist folly’s invitation

Proverbs 9:13-18

Folly is an unruly woman; she is simple and knows nothing. 14 She sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the highest point of the city, 15 calling out to those who pass by, who go straight on their way, 16 “Let all who are simple come to my house!” To those who have no sense she says,

17 “Stolen water is sweet; food eaten in secret is delicious!” 18 But little do they know that the dead are there, that her guests are deep in the realm of the dead.

- Folly is unruly. She is loud, rowdy, and boisterous. She is simple and knows nothing. Instead of thinking ahead, working hard, and preparing, she sits. Instead of shaping the world, she watches it with her loud, simplistic opinions.

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- She also gives an invitation to those passing by to join her in her house. She will teach you the tricks of the trade, how not to work and get things by stealing and taking it from others. Her offer is what she has, which you don't have to work for, and it is sweet. And what you get from her and enjoy in secret is delicious. But the trick she plays on others, is the trick she uses on you. She is lying to you and only wants to use you. Because the guests in her house are living in the realm of the dead. They are already dead in their trespasses and sin. There is a certain sweetness to the life, but sweet water is actually poison, and will take your life.

Conclusion

- You have a choice to make. Will you choose the path of wisdom, or will you persist down the path of folly? Whose invitation will you accept? If you choose wisdom, your path starts at the gateway of the fear of the Lord. It will give you life and end in life eternal. If you choose folly, all you have to do is keep on living according to your fallen nature. It looks like it will give you life, but it will take it and end in death, and that death is eternal.
- I would encourage you to read the rest of the book of Proverbs, and to read the whole book, over and over again. Keep your heart in a place to treasure the Word of the Lord. Give yourself to it as He gives himself to you.
- Keep your eyes on Jesus; He is the power and wisdom of God. (1 Cor. 1:24)

