

# Proverbs 8 - The Call of Wisdom

To read:

1. John 1:1-18
2. Ephesians 1

## I. Introduction

### A. This morning we are going to continue in Proverbs looking at Proverbs 8

1. The first section of Proverbs, Proverbs 1-9, is a series of longer discourses unlike most of the rest of the book which are short sayings and observations that point us toward wisdom
2. This section starts with an introduction and then makes thirteen appeals followed by a conclusion in chapter nine
3. Eleven of these appeals are from a father to a son and these make up the content of this section - what is wisdom? A father shares with his son - these eleven appeals make up the bulk of this section and form the content - if we're going to talk about wisdom, what sorts of things are wisdom, what does it look like to walk in wisdom
4. But near the beginning and the end, wisdom herself makes two appeals and these two appeals deal less with the content of wisdom - how does walking in wisdom look - but more about the necessity of wisdom - wisdom call's out and urges us to desire and pursue her

### B. Wisdom's first call came near the beginning of this section in Proverbs 1:20-33

1. Wisdom called out to the simple and the scoffer asking why they reject her
2. And then she warned them that if they continue to reject her, they will be destroyed
3. But the last verse ends with a ray of hope, if the simple turn and embrace wisdom, they will be secure, not fearing any disaster
4. So, wisdom's first call was very dark, a warning passage calling us to listen to her, but it ended with a ray of hope

### C. Then, for six chapters, a father shares with his son what it means to pursue wisdom

1. The father urges his son to flee from greed and violence
2. The father urges his son to get wisdom instead of falling in with evildoers
3. The father urges his son to fear the Lord in all of life
4. The father urges his son to seek the blessings of wisdom
5. The father urges his son to prize wisdom above all else
6. The father urges his son to walk the path of wisdom not the path of wickedness
7. The father urges his son to place wisdom in his heart
8. The father urges his son to rejoice in his wife and forsake adultery
9. The father urges his son to deal wisely with those around him
10. The father urges his son to remember the dangers of jealousy and forsake adultery
11. The father urges his son to remember the danger of adultery and forsake it

### D. In chapter 8, wisdom calls out again, and this is the passage we are going to look at this morning

1. And it mirrors the first call of wisdom, the purpose is to make us desire and pursue wisdom
2. It doesn't teach us particularly how to walk in wisdom, but it upholds the beauty and the glory wisdom to make us desire wisdom, to make us want to pursue wisdom
3. But it also is the mirror image because, whereas the first call was dark, a warning of destruction, this second call is a ray of hope - wisdom calls out and promises her blessings to all who will follow her

### E. Read Proverbs 8

### F. Proposition and Outline:

1. Proposition: Wisdom's beauty and glory ought to make us desire her above all other things
2. Outline:
  - i. What is Wisdom's call? (Looking at the Passage)
  - ii. Who is Wisdom? (Looking at Christ)
  - iii. How do we respond to Wisdom's call? (Looking at us)

## II. What is Wisdom's call? (Looking at the Passage)

### A. As we look at Proverbs 8, the first thing we need to notice is it has a mirror image pattern in it

1. The beginning and end of Proverbs 8 are similar to each other and the middle two sections reflect each other as well
2. So there is an A-B-B-A pattern to Proverbs 8, which calls us to try to understand how the A and B sections relate to each other, what does A and B have to do with each other
3. The 'A' sections, the beginning and end of Proverbs 8, are both calls to heed wisdom's voice - to hear and follow, while the 'B' sections, the center of Proverbs 8, list the characteristics and the identification of wisdom - they answer the question, who is wisdom?
4. So, this morning, the central 'B' sections relate to the outer 'A' sections by providing motivation to the 'A' sections - the characteristics and identity of wisdom should make us desire to heed her voice, to hear her call and follow

### B. We'll start by looking at the 'A' sections - wisdom calls out

1. Proverbs 8 starts with - *Does not wisdom call? Does not understanding raise her voice? On the heights beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand; beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries aloud: "To you, O men, I call, and my cry is to the children of man. O simple ones, learn prudence; O fools, learn sense. Hear, for I will speak noble things, and from my lips will come what is right, for my mouth will utter truth; wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing twisted or crooked in them. They are all straight to him who understands, and right to those who find knowledge. Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.*
  - a. Listen to each of the calls to heed:
    - i. To you, O men, I call
    - ii. O simple ones, learn prudence; O fools, learn sense
    - iii. Hear for I will speak noble things
    - iv. Take my instruction instead of silver and knowledge rather than choice gold
  - b. Wisdom cries out to the simple and the fool urging them to hear her voice
    - i. But she doesn't just call them, she offers them something as well
    - ii. The simple will no longer be simple but will learn prudence, the fool will no longer be foolish, but will learn sense, the wicked will no longer be wicked but will learn righteousness - Wisdom will be better than silver or gold, jewels and all desires to the one who listens and follows
    - iii. In sum, wisdom cries out to the simple and the fool and offers to make them more than they are - they may be simple and foolish, but if they hear her call, wisdom will bestow riches and honor on them beyond their wildest imaginations
2. And Proverbs 8 ends with - *"And now, O sons, listen to me: blessed are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the LORD, but he who fails to find me injures himself; all who hate me love death."*
  - a. The end mirrors the beginning, wisdom cries out and calls us to heed her voice
    - i. And now, O sons, listen to me... Hear instruction... be wise... do not neglect it...
  - b. And, like the beginning, wisdom makes a promise to those who hear
    - i. *Blessed is the one who listens to me... For whoever finds me finds life*
    - ii. Wisdom says that those who listen and earnestly pursue her will be blessed, they will find life, they will obtain favor from God
    - iii. Again, wisdom cries out to the simple and the foolish and promises to make them more than they are - the simple who earnestly desires wisdom will be given life and favor with God
3. So the main purpose of Proverbs 8 is to enjoin us to pursue wisdom earnestly - wisdom herself wants us to hear her voice and makes glorious promises to those who listen

**C. But, in between wisdom's calls, there are two beautiful sections of poetry describing wisdom, the 'B' sections**

1. The first section is in verses 12-21, where wisdom describes what she is like - *"I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion. The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate. I have counsel and sound wisdom; I have insight; I have strength. By me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just; by me princes rule, and nobles, all who govern justly. I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me. Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold, and my yield than choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, in the paths of justice, granting an inheritance to those who love me, and filling their treasuries.*
  - a. We could say that this section describes wisdom's character - who is she, what is she like?
    - i. Lady wisdom is full of prudence, knowledge and discretion - she knows and speaks the truth
    - ii. Lady wisdom fears God and hates all wickedness, pride, arrogance and perverted speech - she is full of righteousness
    - iii. Lady wisdom has power and strength to rule, she possess authority and justice - by her kings reign and rulers decree what is just
    - iv. Lady wisdom is wealthy and generous - riches and honor are with her and she loves those who love her, granting them an inheritance and filling their treasuries
  - b. Wisdom's character, her characteristics, are held up to make us love her
    - i. If this is wisdom, then we ought to hear her call, we ought to pursue her earnestly
    - ii. Truly, only the fool would turn away from such a great lady offering herself to him
2. The second section is in verses 22-31, where wisdom now describes who she is - *"The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, 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, then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.*
  - a. The purpose of this section is the same, to make us love wisdom, but instead of describing what she is like, she gives us hints as to who she is
    - i. She existed with God before creation and is the firstborn of all creation - ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth
    - ii. She participated with God in creation - then I was beside him like a master workman
    - iii. She is God's desire and delight - I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always
    - iv. In sum, we could call her the right hand man of God
  - b. So, we should desire wisdom not only because of her glorious characteristics but also her exalted position
    - i. She is no less than the right hand of God sitting over creation with Him and yet she offers herself to us
    - ii. Again, it would truly be only the fool who would listen to her call and reject her

**D. So Wisdom's call is to hear and to heed**

1. Listen to me and I will make you more than you are - I will raise up those who are simple and foolish and crown them with glory and honor
2. But her call is not only listen, but look! See who I am, look at who I am - do you not desire me? Will you not pursue me? I offer myself to you, can you turn away from me?

### III. Who is Wisdom? (Looking at Christ)

#### A. Since wisdom's call is not only listen, but look - look at who I am so that you will desire me beyond all else, I want to continue this morning by looking at who wisdom is

1. This passage hinges on identifying wisdom, so we should ask the passage, who is wisdom? Who matches the characteristics of the one who calls out in Proverbs 8? Why is wisdom personified in Proverbs and who could possibly hold all of these traits?
2. Is it merely an accident, a literary device, that personifies wisdom in Proverbs, or is there a greater truth to see?
3. And I think you all know that my answer is, 'no', it is no accident that wisdom is personified in Proverbs because, whether or not the authors and compilers of Proverbs understood the powerful truth of what they were saying, the Spirit of God worked through them to be giving us a picture of the One who is Wisdom - Jesus Christ

#### B. So, we can go back to the attributes of wisdom and see that each of them are fulfilled in Christ

1. Remember the attributes of wisdom in Proverbs 8
  - a. Wisdom is full of prudence, knowledge and discretion - she knows and speaks the truth
  - b. Wisdom fears God and hates all wickedness, pride, arrogance and perverted speech - she is full of righteousness
  - c. Wisdom has power and strength to rule, she possesses authority and justice - by her kings reign and rulers decree what is just
  - d. Wisdom is wealthy and generous - riches and honor are with her and she loves those who love her, granting them an inheritance and filling their treasuries
  - e. And above all, wisdom was with God and participated with God in creation as His right-hand man, the firstborn over all creation and therefore possesses life that she can grant to men
2. Each of these attributes is fulfilled in Christ
  - a. Christ is the One who knows and speaks the truth
    - i. This is John's emphasis in John 8, John 8:31-32, 38, 40 - *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ... I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father." ... but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God.*
    - ii. Christ is the wisdom of God speaking to man, He knows the truth and with prudence and discretion speaks the truth
  - b. Christ is the One who fears God and hates all wickedness
    - i. Isaiah prophesies about Christ, Isaiah 11:1-3 - *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.*
    - ii. Christ is the wisdom of God full of the fear of God, so He hates wickedness and walks in righteousness, I Peter 2:22 - *He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.*
    - iii. Christ is the wisdom of the righteousness of God embodied in human form
  - c. Christ is the One who has power and strength to rule, who possess authority and justice
    - i. Christ came and taught as a wise teacher, full of authority - Matthew 7:28-29 - *And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.*
    - ii. And he claimed all authority for Himself - Matthew 28:18 - *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*
    - iii. So Paul can look back and say that Christ is the epitome of wisdom displayed in authority, Ephesians 1:19-23 - *[that you may know] his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,*
    - iv. Or again in Colossians 2:9-10 - *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.*
    - v. Christ is the embodiment of wisdom because He embodies it's authority

- d. Christ is the One who is wealthy and generous
  - i. Riches and honor were with wisdom and she gave them freely to those who loved her, bestowing on them an inheritance
  - ii. But Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:7-11 - *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,*
  - iii. Christ possessed all of the riches of His grace, which he lavished upon us in all *wisdom and insight*, granting us an inheritance - He is the riches and the generosity of wisdom
- e. And, perhaps most importantly, Christ is the One with God in the beginning, participating in creation and is the firstborn over all creation, possessing life in Himself that He can give to men
  - i. I think we can see this very clearly in John 1, where John introduces us to the Word
  - ii. John opens his gospel by showing us Christ with God before the beginnings of the earth, John 1:1-2 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.*
  - iii. In fact, not only the statement, but the words John uses call us to remember Proverbs 8 - the *logos*, the word or the saying, was with God, very similar to saying wisdom was with God in the beginning, *logos* and wisdom are closely connected concepts
  - iv. And then John calls us to see that Jesus participated in Creation with God, John 1:3 - *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*
  - v. Paul says a similar thing in Colossians 1:15-17, calling Him specifically the firstborn of all creation - *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 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. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*
  - vi. And, coming back to John 1, John continues his introduction to his gospel by calling us to see that life belonged to Christ - if Christ is wisdom, then He must be the One who can give life to those who listen to Him, John 1:4-5 - *In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not understood it.*
  - vii. John and Paul draw out of the themes of Proverbs 8 and apply them to Christ - the beautiful picture of wisdom reigning beside God is embodied in Christ - He is the wisdom beside God in creation, He is the wisdom of God providing life and favor with God

**C. So, it should be no surprise that Christ is frequently referred to as the embodiment of wisdom**

1. Christ Himself hinted at this in Matthew 12:42 - *The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.*
  - a. The wisdom of Solomon was renowned throughout the eastern world, but Christ claims that, in Him, there was something greater, for He was wisdom itself
2. Paul is more explicit in I Corinthians 1:30 - *And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,*
  - a. Paul says that Christ has become for us wisdom from God - that Christ's righteousness, His sanctification and His redemption are God's wisdom working on our behalf, the wisdom of God offering life to fools
3. Or again, in Colossians 2:1-3 - *For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*
  - a. Paul tells us that all of wisdom is hidden in Christ, He is the embodiment of wisdom, so there can be no other source of wisdom, we need look nowhere else

**D. So, the ultimate purpose of Proverbs 8 is, once again, to point us forward to Christ**

1. Proverbs 8 exalts wisdom in order to exalt Christ
2. Proverbs 8 calls us to desire wisdom because we should desire Christ
3. Proverbs 8 moves us to pursue wisdom because we should be pursuing Christ

## IV. How should we pursue Wisdom? (Looking at Us)

### A. As we finish our meditation on Proverbs 8 this morning, I want to think about what Proverbs 8 calls us to

1. The purpose of Proverbs 8 is relatively simple - to exalt wisdom - but it does this in four parts
  - a. First, Proverbs 8 calls us to perceive ourselves rightly
  - b. Second, it calls us to perceive wisdom gloriously
  - c. Third, it calls us to desire wisdom greatly
  - d. Fourth, it calls us to pursue wisdom earnestly
2. And, if wisdom is ultimately embodied in Christ, then this is what we should do - exalt Christ - by:
  - a. First, perceiving ourselves rightly (need physician)
  - b. Second, by perceiving Christ gloriously (behold glory transform one degree of glory)
  - c. Third, by desiring Christ greatly
  - d. Fourth, by pursuing Christ earnestly

### B. First, we should perceive ourselves rightly

1. I think it would be easy to overlook this in Proverbs 8, but wisdom carefully identifies who she is crying out to, Proverbs 8:3-4 - *"To you, O men, I call, and my cry is to the children of man. O simple ones, learn prudence; O fools, learn sense."*
2. Wisdom cries out to men, but specifically to the fool and the simple - wisdom's call is for those who recognize that they are the fool and the simpleton, the one who needs to listen and find wisdom
3. So, the first thing we need to do as we meditate on Proverbs 8 is recognize the truth of wisdom's call - we are the fool and the simpleton - we are the ones who have lost the knowledge of God and failed to rejoice in God's goodness - we are the ones desperately in need of wisdom
4. And therefore, we are the ones desperately in need of Christ - we could rephrase this in New Testament terms with Matthew 9:12-13 - *But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."*
5. To receive this Proverb rightly, we must identify ourselves as the ones in need of wisdom, to be honest with ourselves and recognize that we are the fools, we are the sick, the sinful, the ones in need of a physician, the ones in need of a savior
6. Until we recognize this and until we approach this passage with that attitude, the call of wisdom will be useless to us - to hear wisdom's call we must recognize that we are in desperate need of wisdom, we are in desperate need of Christ

### C. But then second, in contrast, we should perceive Christ gloriously

1. The beautiful poetry describing wisdom's characteristics in the center of Proverbs 8 serves to set the glories of wisdom against the simplicity of fools
  - a. Proverbs 8 calls the fool to see who he really is, but then to turn and gaze at the glories of wisdom
  - b. So, having identified ourselves as the fools, the ones desperately in need of wisdom in Christ, we can and must turn and perceive the glories of wisdom embodied in Christ
2. This is kind of a side-note, but mostly on topic, but this is why I structure my messages similarly every week
  - a. Proverbs 8 calls us to look at ourselves but then to look at Christ because all of Scripture calls us to correctly identify ourselves but then to turn and behold the glories of Christ set against our wretchedness
  - b. And so, as I've meditated on the purpose of preaching, this is preaching's ultimate purpose - to display the glories of Christ as revealed in the Word of God
  - c. It is the glories of Christ that provides the answer to our wretchedness; it is the glories of Christ that offers a hope of salvation; and it is only the glories of Christ that will cause any change in us
  - d. So, I work from the passage to Christ every week because that is what saves us and that is what changes us - I have no power to change you and, to be honest, you have no power to change you, so for preaching to be effective, it's purpose must be to uphold that which is effective - the glories of Christ

3. So, as Proverbs 8 exalts wisdom we should set our hearts to see the glories of Christ
  - a. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians was for them to see how great Christ was, Ephesians 1:17-19 - *I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.*
  - b. And Paul's promise to the Corinthians was that they could behold the glory of the Lord, II Corinthians 3:18, 4:6 - *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit... For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*
  - c. So, as we see Christ as wisdom exalted in Proverbs 8, we ought to take each of these attributes and meditate on how Christ excels in these things and rejoice in how great our Savior and Bridegroom is, use Proverbs 8 as a change to rejoice in the exaltation of Christ

**D. Third, having seen the glories of Christ, we ought to desire Christ greatly**

1. At the end of Proverbs 8, wisdom characterizes the one who has truly heard her voice, Proverbs 8:34 - *Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors.*
  - a. Wisdom characterizes the one who listens as one who greatly desires to obtain wisdom
  - b. The one who listens desires wisdom to the point of setting everything else aside and waiting at the gates of the city to watch for wisdom, to the point of finding the door of wisdom's house and sitting there and waiting until wisdom gets home
  - c. The one who has truly heard wisdom's voice will not be satisfied in anything else because they know that nothing else could possibly compare to her
  - d. As wisdom herself says, Proverbs 8:10-11 - *Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.*
2. And this ought to be our attitude toward Christ
  - a. As we see, as we behold His glories, the glories of the risen king, we ought to desire his beauty, this ought to be our ultimate goal and our only satisfaction, we should be satisfied in nothing less than Christ
  - b. Our attitude ought to be that of Psalm 27:4 - *One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.*
  - c. We desire to dwell in the house of the Lord so that we can gaze on His beauty, we should behold His glory and then we should rejoice in His glory, we should see Him and we should desire Him
3. So let your heart be moved by the glories of Proverbs 8 and how they are reflected in Christ
  - a. When we hear words like Colossians 1:15-20, our hearts ought to rejoice in Christ, to greatly desire Him - *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 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. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*
  - b. And these are merely the truths of Proverbs 8, set out about Christ

#### **E. Fourth, our desire for Christ ought to push us to pursue Christ earnestly**

1. Ultimately, Proverbs 8 doesn't just call us to desire wisdom, but to do something to get wisdom
  - a. Even as we've just seen, the one who has truly heard wisdom will set everything else aside in order to obtain wisdom, even sitting and watching at the gate until wisdom walks by
  - b. The one who truly knows the desire of wisdom will set everything else aside in order to obtain wisdom, they will search for her and pursue her at the cost of everything else, because they know that - *For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the LORD, but he who fails to find me injures himself; all who hate me love death.*"
2. And this ought to be the intensity of our pursuit for Christ
  - a. Paul understood this clearly, as he told the Philippians in Philippians 3:8-11 - *Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith--- that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.*
  - b. Paul saw and desired the glories of Christ, he knew how valuable Christ was, so He was willing to set everything else aside in order to gain Christ
  - c. And Christ calls all of us to this same passionate pursuit, Matthew 13:44-46 - *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*
3. It's this desire and pursuit of Christ that then fuels the Christian life
  - a. This pursuit of Christ fuels I John 2:15-17 - *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world---the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions---is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*
    - i. We set aside our love for anything in this world, because we'd rather have Christ
  - b. This pursuit of Christ fuels Colossians 3 - *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.... Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.*
    - i. We put to death our old selves and put on Christ because we'd rather have Christ
  - c. All of the Christian life is fueled by this pursuit - we don't obey Scripture merely because we are told to obey, we obey Scripture because we want to gain Christ
    - i. And this is why seeing the glories of Christ in Scripture is so important because the glories of Christ fuel our desire for Christ which fuels our pursuit of Christ which fuels all of the Christian life

#### **F. So, I'll close with a few questions:**

1. Have you looked at yourself and can you honestly say that you are the fool? Do you see yourself as one in desperate need of wisdom, in desperate need of salvation? Until you truly see yourself this way, Christ is worthless to you.
2. Do you look at Scripture and see the glories of Christ? Are the glories of Christ the meat and the worth of what you bring away from the Scriptures? If you are drawing something else out of Scripture you are selling yourself short.
3. When you see the glories of Christ, is your heart moved in desire for Christ? Do the glories of Christ give your heart the deepest joy and the greatest motivation? If your heart is not moved by the glories of Christ, then honestly you must not have seen the glories of Christ.
4. As your heart is moved toward the glories of Christ, will you earnestly pursue Christ? Do you value obtaining Him more than anything in this world? Will you set aside the things of this world in order to gain Christ? How? How will you do that this week?