

**Proverbs 1: 20-33; “Wisdom Calls Aloud”, A Devotional Bible Study given
on the evening of August 26th, 2020, at the Share Meeting at church, by
Pastor Paul Rendall, for those gathered to listen.**

It is important for all Christians to understand that their being saved from their sins is the beginning of a walk with Christ through this life in which He instructs us on path of righteousness, where He teaches us His way of thinking and doing things, because the Lord Jesus is the One who perfectly represents God. You will notice, however, that wisdom is pictured here in these verses as a woman, and that leads us to ask – Why? She is pictured this way because, even though wisdom personified is only really found in Christ Himself, yet it is true that He has chosen to communicate His wisdom to us through His word by His Church, who is pictured as a female, as His Bride, the one whom He shares all things with, and who He has sent on a mission to make disciples.

So wisdom is personified as a woman in these verses, and in many other places in the book of Proverbs because Christ’s Church, by her teachers, whom Christ raises up, has been commissioned to sound forth His word; that is, to both publicly and privately deliver it to those who are simple; those who do not understand how much they need God’s wisdom in living their life. So, let me open this up for you a little more by showing you, 1st – The very great public and personal appeals of this woman Wisdom. (verses 20-23) 2nd – The very great consequences of a person’s not listening to her calls to repent and believe her words. (verses 24-32) And 3rd – The very great blessings which will come to the person who listens to her. (verse 33)

1st of all – Let’s consider the very great public and personal appeals of this woman Wisdom.

Verse 20 says – “Wisdom calls aloud outside; she raises her voice in the open squares.” “She cries in the chief concourses, at the openings of the gates in the city she speaks her words: ‘How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?’ “For scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge.” “Turn at my rebuke; surely I will pour out my Spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.” I am told that the word translated Wisdom here is plural as well as feminine, and yet the verbs are singular. The first verses of the 9th chapter are the same. “Wisdoms calls aloud outside”. If ever there were a picture of street preaching in the Bible, surely it would be found here. This woman Wisdom stands and she raises her voice in the open squares, she cries out in the chief concourses, at the opening of the gates of the city she speaks her words. This is not a Biblical appeal for women to take up preaching publicly, let alone on street corners. Rather, it shows us the responsibility of the combined church, her preachers and her people, to sound forth the word of God in a public way through their worship services and also their evangelistic efforts.

Look at 1st Thessalonians 1, verses 5-8. “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.” “And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.” “For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place.” “Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.” So this is how the believers in Thessalonica responded to the preaching of God’s wisdom in the gospel, to them. It was to receive it and believe it, even though they were in much affliction because of the persecution that some were bringing to them because of it; even so, they had the joy of the Holy Spirit’s witnessing to their hearts that they were doing the right thing.

And being convinced by the wisdom and power of God's word and His working, they began to sound forth the truth of the gospel and God's word, to others. There is a manifold wisdom that the Church is called to preach to whoever will hear it; that is, the truth of God's word on every subject related to our faith. We should desire to speak to people about repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We should be willing to cry to them through our worship services, the truth about God, and how important it is for them to turn at the rebuke of God's word concerning their simplicity, and their delighting in scorning at His word, to stop hating Biblical knowledge, and to consider it. If they do, God will pour out His Spirit upon them and make His words known to them in a saving way.

We should understand that this kind of rebuke that is given to sinners in the preaching of the gospel, is intended to bring conviction of sin, so that those who have not considered the danger that their soul is in, would receive the truth that those who scorn the Bible are only hurting themselves. That, receiving Christ and going about to be wise in seeking to keep God's commandments, is the very wisest and best thing that they can do. All Christians need to be willing to help other people around them to understand the terrible dangers of continuing to live for this world and the pleasures of sin. People by nature are simple ones who love simplicity. We must sound forth the truth of the gospel and God's word in whatever ways that we think that we can, both publicly and privately, so that scorners and fools might wake up to the eternal danger that they are in.

We must see and understand that there are different types of sinners. There are those who are simple ones. They are those who do not see the evil of sin. They do not understand how much sin will hurt them and other people; how much it dishonors God, and how much it defiles their mind and heart, so that they cannot really love other people, or even their own life. A simple person is a sinner who is passive in the hands of evil, but the scorner is a person who is actively against good. The writer of the Preacher's Homiletical Commentary says – "He is a sinner of a deeper dye." "The child who is indifferent to his good father's love and the attractions of his happy home is a sinner, but the son who mocks his parents and holds up their words to ridicule is certainly a greater sinner." A fool is "a man who would rather use means to increase his disease than to seek to cure it." "The blind man who chooses to remain blind when he might be healed is certainly a fool." "He who hates the knowledge which would save him and prefers death to life is the most unwise man upon the face of God's earth." (end of quote)

In this regard, we must understand that we are in a spiritual battle. We must speak our words to all who will listen, telling them to turn to God and to receive the word of the Scriptures for their own good, and for their salvation from sin. We should be aware that there will be times when there will be satanic opposition, and we may experience difficulty and trial because of our boldness in sharing the truth. But when we are faithful to declare it, the manifold wisdom of God will be set forth, and sounded forth, and sinners will be shown the wisdom which leads to salvation and the manifold wisdom that the Scriptures contain which leads all who will heed it, to holiness of life and good behavior that will glorify God. 2nd Timothy 3: 13-15 – "But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." "But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Look also at Ephesians chapter 3, verses 8-13. The apostle Paul says – "To me, who am less than the least of the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which

He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.” “Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.” So this manifold wisdom is being made known to the principalities and powers. This is demonstrated to both the good angels and the bad.

2nd - The very great consequences of a person's not listening to Wisdom's calls to repent and believe her words. (verses 24-32)

I will not take the time to read verses 24-32 in their entirety once again, but I will overview these consequences with you. Verse 24 states that God Himself, having through this woman Wisdom, publicly preached and called to the sinner, by means of His people's preaching and sharing of His word, seeing that they still continually refuse the truth of it, and will not regard it; that they disdained all the counsel of His word, and would have none of His rebuke, He says that He will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their terror comes like a storm upon them. This is only just on God's part. His offers of grace and help and forgiveness, all being spurned, He will not take it from them forever, but He will deal with them according to the way that they have despised His counsel. They hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord. And so they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled to the full with their own fancies, it says in verse 31.

I think that we little realize just how great the distress and anguish will be when unrepentant sinners come to realize just how much they have destroyed themselves by their own sins, and by their refusing and resisting all the merciful and gracious offers which God has spoken to them in His word, delivered to them by His people. The turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them. God even says that He will laugh at their calamity and mock when their terror comes. They will even call on God, but He will not answer. This shows us that God takes notice of how He is treated by men; whether His word is received by them, and how they respond to wisdom's calls through God's people. Let us learn to warn people about the reality of eternal judgment and the punishment of hell, so that they might flee from the wrath of God against their sins.

Then, 3rd – The very great blessings which will come to the person who listens to Wisdom. (verse 33)

“But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil.” The person who listens to the wisdom of the word of God as it is preached and shared by the people of God, it says here, will dwell safely, and will be secure, and without fear of evil. What a precious promise to unworthy and undeserving sinners; to receive these kinds of blessings. Who does not want to dwell safely, and be secure, and without the fear of evil? And this becomes a conscious part of the experience of the Christian; the person who is listening to God and to Christ, as the Father and the Son speak to them in the word, and while they walk with Him, He gives them all the spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. Psalm 112, verses 5-8 goes even farther and says – “A good man deals graciously and lends; He will guide his affairs with discretion.” “Surely he will never be shaken; the righteous will be in everlasting remembrance.” “He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.” “His heart is established; he will not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.” All of these good things come to person who listens to wisdom. Not only will they be wise with the wisdom which is from God, knowing His word and learning to keep His commandments, but they will have great peace and contentment in doing so. He will not be afraid, but he will know that God is his strength, and his song, and his salvation.