

Proverbs 2.1-22—Wisdom From Above for the New Year (2023)

I. Introduction

- a. As 2022 came to an end last night, it is fitting that we take time to evaluate our lives. That's why it is fitting that we have the Lord's Supper today when we ask Jesus to do what the psalmist writes at the end of (Ps. 139:23-24) ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! ²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!
- b. We come to the Table as a sort of rehearsal. When you do rehearsals, like for weddings, you are looking for the flaws before the main event. Think of this rehearsal as preparing you for the day you stand before God. I think it wise to evaluate now rather than later. I think it foolish to take this serious moment lightly.
- c. Maybe we should think of the end of a year as the end of our lives. Imagine today is the end but Jesus is really here among us. He is the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep. To fear the Lord is to know he knows everything about you. He knows everything the rest of us does not know. That is the beginning of wisdom. To look at your life and consider your death is wise. (Ps. 90:12) ¹² So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

II. Main Point

- a. The main point of this text is verse 5 that you will understand the fear of the LORD and find God. But what is it that you find?

III. Outline

- a. What is wisdom?
- b. How do we get it?
- c. What is the benefit of wisdom?
- d. Did wisdom lead you to Christ?

IV. Exposition

- a. How would you define wisdom?
 - i. You might rightly say there is a wisdom of the world and a wisdom of God. They are not the same.
 - ii. Our culture defines wisdom as a genius. Therefore, wisdom resides with the intellectual elites.
 - iii. I think in our church, wisdom would be equated with one's age. To be older would be considered wise. I have found that to be generally true. But age like intelligence does not mean one is wise. There are many foolish old people.
 1. This is similar to those who know a lot about scripture but do not do it. Do not apply it. The scriptures never change their life.
 2. Another example, you could articulate what the Advent sermons mean from hearing the sermons but then never seek to be consciously aware that Christ has come to save sinners that we might take up our cross and follow him NOW.
 - iv. Here's another general definition: The greatest human wisdom is the *factual knowledge* and the *situational insight* and the *necessary resolve* that together have the greatest likelihood of success in achieving the intended...goal.
 - v. Defined from this chapter we can say that wisdom is clearly defined in verse 5. **Proverbs 2:5** ⁵ ...you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.
 1. Wisdom is to fear the Lord. Wisdom is to know God. Worship God. Be in awe of Him. Love the Lord. Walk with Him is a relationship.
 2. I'll bring this back around at the conclusion but ultimately Christ is our wisdom. It is through him that we know and worship God. It is in him that we are restored to a right relationship with God and therefore walk by faith in obedience to our Master.

- b. Now that we have defined it, let's consider how we get wisdom.
- i. Proverbs has much to say about how to live your life in godly wisdom but it always sets forth a model of how to receive it.
 - ii. First, I must remind you that wisdom and understanding is outside of us. No one is born with it. It must be taught. It must be sought after. It must be prayer for. Only God has wisdom in himself. Everyone else must be given wisdom.
 1. That means it can be learned. One can grow in wisdom and knowledge. Jesus himself did therefore we must as well. **Luke 2:52** ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.
 2. So, take notice this in this chapter. **Proverbs 2:1-2** My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, ² making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;
 - a. Here is the model I alluded to. It is that of a father and a son. The wise father had been taught by his father and therefore passes wisdom on to his son. The same is true for moms and daughters.
 - i. I often see my wife having life talks with our daughters. In fact, I walked in on one this afternoon. Kimberly is preparing Lydia how to live as a Christian woman in this world of darkness.
 - b. Where are the godly fathers and mothers of our day? The children of our day are a product of a lack of fathers leading their homes to fear and know God.
 - i. You might say, well my parents did do that with me. You are at a disadvantage but there are people available to help you. My parents did not teach me either. But godly men taught me how.
 - ii. I'm afraid that there will be a lot of dads who will have to give an account for how they raised their kids. And I know that it comes a time where they are responsible for their actions but their present actions maybe the result of your lack of sitting down and saying, "My son, if you will receive my words and treasure up my commands with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding." You may need to go to your children and ask them to forgive you.
 - iii. I want to tell you fathers, it might not be too late. You may still have opportunity to make this right and teach your sons and daughters godly wisdom.
 - c. So the model is that of a father teaching his son. But the son or daughter has a responsibility in this. They must receive it, treasure it, be attentive, incline his heart to the wisdom his father is teaching him.
 - i. But that's not all. Verse 3 goes even further. **Proverbs 2:3-4** ³ yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, ⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,
 - ii. Did you see the obligation of the son? Pray for insight and understanding. King Solomon asked for it. James says if you lack wisdom pray. Why? Verse 6 answers that. Because the LORD gives wisdom.
 - iii. What is it that you seek after? This seeking looks like the seeking of your lost payroll check that was misplaced. Imagine the eagerness of that search and you will just begin to see what it should look like to seek the wisdom of God.

- iv. Dear sons and daughters (no matter your age), you may need to go to your father and mother and ask them to forgive you for not listening and being responsible to seek wisdom from God.
- iii. Alright. Here's the practical steps you need to take. This father and son model is not only for your own children. Paul often referred to Timothy as his son though he was not related. We ought to teach the wisdom of God to our own and other "sons in the faith." Find someone to pour God's wisdom into. Meet with them regularly. In fact, schedule the time. Talk about the Lord. Talk about the bible. Ask them hard questions. Ask them how their search for godly wisdom is going. What are they doing to seek it? What things are changing in their life? What are they struggling with? And then, just be with them. Take them with you places. Let them observe how a godly man acts in the world.
 1. I mentioned Timothy. His mother and grandmother poured into his life. It sounds like he did not have a father who taught him the wisdom of God. Take note of this.
 - a. **2 Timothy 3:14-17** ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.
 2. I want to offer this. Any parent or grandparent that wants to learn how to do these things, I'm here to help you with a time to pray and read the Bible. How to do family devotions. To choose a Bible reading plan for this next year. If you do not plan you will not seek wisdom as you ought.
 - a. We do not claim to be the experts. We have been given much. We have been taught by so many godly people throughout the years. We have made tons of mistakes but we keep pressing on.
 - b. So, I will meet with you to help you. You have to come ask me. I cannot help you if you do not want to seek it.
- c. What will the wisdom of God do?
 - i. So very quickly, notice the if's. **Proverbs 2:1-5** My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, ² making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; ³ yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, ⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, ⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.
 - ii. In light of this, God promises to give wisdom. **Proverbs 2:6** For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;
 - iii. What will knowing God and understanding his ways do? **Proverbs 2:7-12** ⁷ he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, ⁸ guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. ⁹ Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; ¹⁰ for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; ¹¹ discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you, ¹² delivering you from the way of evil
 1. The wisdom of God is a shield. It guards your path and watches over your way.
 2. You will understand how to make righteous decisions...godly decisions. You will understand how to treat others justly and equally. In fact, every good path will become clear to you.

- a. How? Because wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. God's wisdom will be in you. Indeed, that is the word of God and the Spirit of God. You will enjoy knowing the right path that pleases God.
 - b. God's wisdom will watch over you and guard you, which will deliver you from evil. Ultimately, we are all fools. But if you have repented of your sins and turned to Christ in faith, then Christ is your deliverer. He is your wisdom!
- iv. Well, this proverb goes on to give some examples of the evil that you will be delivered from.
1. First the example of evil men...maybe a good buddy of yours. **Proverbs 2:12-15** from men of perverted speech, ¹³ who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness, ¹⁴ who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil, ¹⁵ men whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways.
 - a. So if you use perverted speech you are not walking in God's wisdom. You are following the path of evil men.
 - b. If you think crude jokes are funny. Or you enjoy lude comments about women you are following the path of evil men. Their way is crooked not straight. Scheming and deceptive.
 - c. **Ephesians 4:29-32** ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.
 2. The second list is that of sexual immorality for both men and women. **Proverbs 2:16-19** ¹⁶ So you will be delivered from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words, ¹⁷ who forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God; ¹⁸ for her house sinks down to death, and her paths to the departed; ¹⁹ none who go to her come back, nor do they regain the paths of life.
 - a. If I do not warn my son with God's wisdom...God's path...or if you warn him and he ignores God's word then he will not be delivered.
 - b. It is evil to commit adultery. It is evil to live and sleep with someone you are not married to. It is evil to look at a woman in lust whether on the street, the mall or on your phone.
 - c. This woman (this foolish and evil way) will seduce you with smooth words...flattery. Words that are slippery. Her words will draw you into her evil way down a smooth, slippery, straight path.
 - d. This woman has walked away from her husband and her covenant with God.
 - e. Where will that lead her? It says her house will sink down to death. But just the woman?
 - f. No...even those who go to her. Indeed, none who goes to her come back. They are like a sheep led to slaughter.
 3. You will be delivered from all of that if you learn and understand the fear of the Lord and know God. It must be taught. That's why I plead with you all to desire discipleship.
 4. The awe of God. The worship of God. The walking with God. Your love of God through Jesus Christ will deliver you from these paths of evil that lead to destruction.

5. **Proverbs 2:20-22** ²⁰ So you will walk in the way of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous. ²¹ For the upright will inhabit the land, and those with integrity will remain in it, ²² but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.

6. **Which path are you on?**

V. Conclusion

- a. Do you love Jesus? Does your husband love Jesus? Does your wife love Jesus? Do your children love Jesus? Do you all love Jesus more than anything or anyone else?
- b. If you were to stand before God today and he opened the books to read in courtroom what is really true of you what would he say? If he were here with us, walking among the isles like he owned the place and owned you what would he find?
- c. It's time to be honest before the Lord. He already knows everything. It's time to get right with the Lord. It's time to acknowledge what is really true of us.
- d. Will you have Jesus? Does his broken body and shed blood mean anything to you? What is it that your really want?