

“Living Proverbs”
Evening Gathering, August 12, 2009
Preaching Wisdom
United Theological Seminary

Wisdom’s Invitation

Two Readings

Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16

Wisdom is radiant and unfading,
and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and found by those who seek her.
She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.
One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,
for she will be found sitting at the gate.
To fix one’s thought on her is perfect understanding,
and one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care,
because she goes about seeking those worthy of her,
and she graciously appears to them in their paths,
and meets them in every thought.

Proverbs 2:1-6

My child if you accept my words
and treasure up my commandments within you,
making your ear attentive to wisdom
and inclining your heart to understanding;
if you indeed cry out for insight,
and raise your voice for understanding;
if you seek it like silver,
and search for it as for hidden treasures-
then you will understand the fear of the Lord
and find the knowledge of God
for the Lord gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding

Your Wisdom Heritage

Time for reflection:

Discussion Question:

- What proverbs do you remember being taught by parents, other adults in your childhood and teenage years? What one stands out?
- Has it been helpful to you in your life so far? Does any situation come to mind in which it offered guidance?

The Fear of the Lord: The Bended Knee

“The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 1:7)

Hymn: “Be Thou My Vision” Verses 1 and 2

Time for reflection:

Read Proverbs 29:25 (related proverbs: 19:23; 30:5)

“The fear of others lays a snare, but one who trusts in the Lord is secure.”

Discussion Questions:

- Can you think of a situation in your life in which this has proved to be true?
- How would keeping this proverb in mind help you through the next month of your life?

The Listening Heart

*“The hearing ear and the seeing eye- the Lord has made them both”
(Proverbs 20:12)*

Hymn: “The Gift of Love”

Time for reflection:

Read Matthew 7:3-4

Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how do you say to your neighbor, Let me take the speck out of your eye, while the log is in your own eye?

Discussion Questions:

- When (be specific- cite a particular example from your life) you have seen the speck in your neighbor’s eye and not noticed the log in yours.
- When (again, be specific) have you made an effort to see the good in someone else?

The Cool Spirit

*“Like a city breached, without walls, so is one who lacks self control.
(Proverbs 25:28)*

Hymn: “I Want a Principle Within”

Time for Reflection

Read Proverbs 17:27

One who spares words is knowledgeable;
One who is cool in spirit has understanding.

Discussion Questions:

- When have you refrained from saying something and been glad about it later?
- What area of your life right now would benefit most from self-restraint? How would that allow God to work through that area of your life more fully?

The Subversive Voice

*If anyone would save his life, he must lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s, will save it.
(Mt 16:25; Mk 8:35; Luke 9:24)*

Hymn: “Jesus Calls Us O’er the Tumult”

Time for Reflection

Read Matthew 6:25-34

There I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ... Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?... But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matt 6:25,27,33)

Discussion Questions:

- What is the focus of your anxiety?
- What would you do with the extra mental space and time that would be created if you fasted from anxiety?

Hymn: “Be Thou My Vision” Verses 4 and 5

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, give us wisdom
to exchange self-reliance for trust in you,
to exchange self-absorption for alertness to others’ pain,
to exchange self-indulgence for spiritual discipline, and
to exchange self-preservation for just speech and actions. **Amen.**