

Lenten Series: Listen
“Finding a Word: Listening to the Texts”

Message by DD Adams

3rd SUNDAY IN LENT

March 4, 2018

The reading for today comes from Proverbs chapter 1, verses 20 through 23.

Wisdom shouts in the street; in the public square she raises her voice. Above the noisy crowd, she calls out. At the entrances of the city gates, she has her say: “How long will you clueless people love your naïveté, mockers hold their mocking dear, and fools hate knowledge? You should respond when I correct you. Look, I’ll pour out my spirit on you. I’ll reveal my words to you.” This is God’s word for God’s people.

Please pray with me. God of divine wisdom and knowledge, give us ears that hear as we respond to your word. Cause us to listen with the intention of making more room in our hearts that is stirred by your spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen. Peace be with you!

Wisdom is a divine attribute of God’s spirit. She counsels and warns us as we walk with God throughout the day. She’s pure, gentle, full of mercy, gracious and she overflows with godly fruit—all moral qualities. In Proverbs 1, wisdom is personified as a woman, and she wants passionately to see her children reflect these same qualities back to God.

In just four verses, we hear wisdom's frustration crying out in the streets filled with its noisy crowds who are labeled "clueless" and "naïve" in the proverb. Mockers and fools that resist God and refuse to turn and reorient themselves to their Maker. They hate the knowledge and correction of God, but God has said He will continue to pour out his spirit on those who ask for it.

God's children have every quality they need to live a life of godliness. Last week when we read Romans 8 we heard that we are more than conquerors because God loves us. *We have the power* of God's love that the Holy Spirit has shed abroad in our hearts. *We're stirred* through the spirit *to pursue* God's wisdom and knowledge in our lives. *We're empowered and enabled by God's spirit* to choose as God would have us choose.

As we spend time during this Lenten season listening for the wisdom spoken by the spirit of God—we hear God clarifying to us who we are as His child. The moral qualities of God's wisdom throughout God's word tells us—**we have a guarantee and promise from God.** That as we grow and mature in wisdom, we will learn to use our intellectual powers rightly—because God made us His child.

Foolishness hides its true intentions. It whispers. It's done in secret, but with wisdom, she has nothing to hide! She shouts and raises her voice to encourage the wise to continue walking with her and to reorient them self to stand face to face with their Maker. Who are we? We are children of God first and foremost!

As God's children we're guided by the wisdom of God with its moral qualities. God's children are transformed as they walk in the light; it changes and shapes them into the people of God they were destined to become. They respond to the voice of divine wisdom and knowledge, but it requires submission.

Darkness will always hate the light, because it's a wakeup call. It's a call to turn and reorient one's self to God. It's a call to repentance. Simply stated, we'd rather just continue in the easiest way we're accustomed to doing. It's difficult to change. It's uncomfortable, and it's been said by many, "It's simply too much trouble in my life to confront and deal with the negative energy I project. That's just the way I am."

Well, you're right about the fact that we can project energy that negative, but that's not God's plan for us. God's spirit has already revealed to us in this Psalm that wisdom and knowledge *will be* poured into our lives by the spirit of God. We just need to actively respond and ask for help.

Fact is this. The wisdom and knowledge of God is no more than *information* unless it becomes transformation in our lives. We have to hear wisdom calling us and to listen and respond with the intent to obey. To live a godly life in Christ Jesus, we need to take ourselves off the throne of our lives and put God on that throne. Only then can wisdom and the knowledge of God work in us.

Wisdom is crying out. She cries out and raises her voice so we might hear her. Through the words of Isaiah 1:18, “Come now, and let us reason together, said the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

People may pretend that they’ve bleached their souls white, but truly we know, that to bleach what’s wrong on the inside can only be accomplished by the work of God in our lives. Only God can transform our character qualities to be white as snow.

The extraordinary occurrence, the supernatural act of the wisdom of God being obtained by God’s children is mind-blowing. Godly wisdom can only be captured through responding to the “blood of the lamb”. Only this makes us white as snow and cleanses our heart. Praise God for His power and purity that creates in us a new heart—a washed child of God that responds to wisdom and knowledge.

Please pray with me. God of wisdom and knowledge that transcends all, move in us this day we pray to turn and face you. Give us the strength of your spirit to follow you. We exchange our lack of strength for your wisdom as we learn to obey your prompting. God we repent. Forgive our past, renew us, and put a new and right spirit within us. Teach us wisdom in our secret hearts because we desire your truth O God. Wash me, fill me, and restore me, sustaining me with a willing spirit. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

