

only make my words enter your ears, but will open your understanding to a discernment of their truth, and excellence, and suitableness, and glory; and will open your hearts to their gladdening and saving powers.” So graciously inviting and embracing is the God of our salvation, and that for sinful people like those described in Proverbs 1:22, the simple, the scorers, and the altogether rebellious and hardened ones! It is here like what we read in I Corinthians 2:12, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”

Do you hear and see how the Lord in Proverbs 1:23 and in climactic form with Pentecost declares and shows Himself as so ready and able to save to the uttermost all that come to God in and through Jesus Christ, listening to Wisdom’s, and the Saviour’s, voice from out of His holy Word. The best of God’s people is and remains in himself only always a helpless, hopeless, undeserving sinner before God, but yet coming to Christ, how He embraces us and pledges all that is required for us unto our complete and eternal salvation. God will lead His people, as many as trust and follow Him, onward and forward and heavenward by His Word and Spirit for Jesus’ sake. This is the unchanging gospel truth and it is sounded so clearly already in this Pentecost-like’ proverb, Proverbs 1:23.

This proverb giving gospel truth so earnest and so emphatic, so encouraging and so embracing - what if you will not hear it and just continue in your unbelieving and sinful, worldly ways? Well, reading on in Proverbs 1, we learn there how those who will not repent and believe will perish forever in their sins, meeting with a fearful, awful, eternal judgment brought upon themselves not only because of sin but especially because of unbelief. “But” says the last verse of Proverbs 1, “whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.” Will you listen? The fact of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit’s outpouring now, sent forth from the Father and the Son in glory makes this Pentecost-like proverb all the more urgent to listen to and wonderful to live by. “How long” says the Lord to sinners, “how long?” “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.” Wisdom calls aloud. He that has an ear, let him hear! Amen!

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



A PENTECOST-LIKE PROVERB [2]

This is the second of two messages on Proverbs 1:23. Listen again to this ‘Pentecost-like’ proverb! “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.” In most translations the word “spirit” here in the phrase, “I will pour out my spirit unto you” is correctly not in capital letters, for it refers in the context of Proverbs here not to the Holy Spirit directly, but to the spirit of wisdom. However, as mentioned also last time, we can know that the speaker of wisdom in Proverbs is ultimately Christ Jesus Himself, and the spirit of wisdom refers ultimately to the Holy Spirit who, sent from the Father and the Son, leads in wisdom’s way. We saw, in doing so, how earnest is the gospel call in this proverb and how emphatic too.

The call to all is to turn from sin and the ways of transgression against God’s law and rebellion against the Lord, and to come in repentance and faith in the Lord’s ways according to His Word. Proverbs 1:23, “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.”

Are you listening to this earnest emphatic call? Being a Christian means hearing God’s call, and indeed, by His grace turning from sin to the Lord and living a life of ongoing repentance from sin, and ongoing turning to the Lord and His ways. When you are truly repentant you confess your sins and abhor them and turn to God for forgiveness and renewal. As someone said, “repentance is not like the person who sent the government office a check for taxes with the remark, ‘If I can’t sleep, I’ll send you the rest.” No, but it is wholehearted turning from sin and turning to the Lord. It is leaving the world’s ways and following wisdom’s ways. It is saying no more, “yes” to the flesh, but praying and walking in the Spirit instead.

Are you hearing Wisdom’s call to turn from sinful and foolish ways at God’s rebuke? Will you be convicted and sorry for your sins? Will you keep denying or excusing or hiding your sins instead? Or are you hearing it only partially and content to continue in your own ways, not too concerned about anything at all, for life is fine and you are a whole lot better than many other people, you think and say? Or maybe you are scorning the call because you enjoy your sinful ways too much? Perhaps even you just turn your back on it

all and refuse to listen to the call, but you allow yourself to keep going in ways against God and His will. Since Proverbs 1:23, God Triune has accomplished so much more for the salvation of sinners, indeed, all His gospel promises from the day of man's fall have all but been completely fulfilled, except yet for Christ's second and final return. Will you not hear the message therefore of the outpoured Holy Spirit sent forth now from the Father and Christ Jesus, calling so earnestly and emphatically to repent of sin and believe the gospel message? How long must God call to you before you will listen? Or will you just never listen to the gospel call, never follow wisdom's way, but go on the path of folly to eternal destruction? Even now Wisdom's voice, the Saviour's call, the Spirit's word is urging you, "*Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*" On Pentecost Sunday when Peter preached and called the people to repent and believe, at least 3000 were saved that day! Perhaps one or more will be saved who hear this message today. For sure the mark of being saved is then you do repent of sin, and you keep on repenting of sin. Oh, why shouldn't and wouldn't that be true for you?

Here let us just consider next what so comes through in our proverb and even more with Pentecost, namely, how the Lord is out to save sinners and with Him is all you need for salvation from beginning to end. You do not have, nor do I, any ability of ourselves to save ourselves nor do we of ourselves even see any real need for salvation from sin before God, so foolish and blind we are by nature. But hear now further, what does the text say? "*Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*" Here we see the Lord so encouraging to His audience, our third main point about this Proverb and in connection with Pentecost's message. The Lord isn't only earnest and emphatic about sinners being saved, but most encouraging. "Behold", says the Lord, or 'take note of this. Look! See!' "*I will pour out my spirit unto you,* meaning here the spirit of wisdom. The verb "pour out" here means literally "uncontrollable or uncontrolled [overflowing], gushing forth". The picture is one of such readiness to give whatever is needed to lead in wisdom's ways for now and forever. So is God Triune in and through Christ Jesus. He is an overflowing fountain of all good, and whatever is demanded of Him for salvation, He also graciously will work and give, even as you turn from sin to Him.

Again, thinking of the Holy Spirit's almighty, overflowing, outpouring on that first Pentecost long ago and still now, do you not see here God's grand encouragement in His ways? Whatever is needed for the whole of salvation the Lord will give and work by His almighty grace in and through Christ Jesus. Charles Bridges writes in his commentary on Proverbs 1:23, "If your heart be hard, your convictions faint, your resolutions unsteady; all is provided in the promise, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon you.' Move then, and act in dependence upon the Almighty Mover and Agent...His promises with

one mouth assure a welcome to the willing heart. If it cannot move, His Spirit can compel, point, draw it to the Saviour. Yes, in the desire to turn, has not the Saviour already touched it and drawn it to Himself?" But remember the call, "How long?", is to an instant conversion; not to the consideration or resolution of the morrow, but to the decision of today. Delay is mockery of God. "*Quench nor the Spirit*" now striving, but which "*will not always strive with man.*" [I Thessalonians. 5:19 & Genesis 6:3] How true also what another said: "We harden our hearts when we intend to take our pleasure in sin today, though we resolve to hear the Word of God tomorrow." "*Turn you at my reproof*" says the LORD, "*behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*" Do you hear the gracious offer of supply in all our needs in this Pentecost-like proverb?

It is a little like that story about a father with his children in the house wanting to teach a gospel lesson. What did he do? He went to the top of a large high staircase and said to his children standing at the bottom, 'Okay, now you have to come up here, but you have to do it without touching a single step and neither can you touch at all the railing.' Well how would any of the children do that? It seemed, and indeed was, totally impossible. But then one of the children remarked, 'Oh, I know the way, Dad, you come down here and put me on your shoulder and then walk up to the top and what you required will be accomplished.'

That is only a story but it helps show my point now. With the gospel way, as promoted in Proverbs 1:23 and as proclaimed at Pentecost, the Saviour calls with so much encouragement, promising and pledging all we need both in coming to Christ and turning from sin, and following after the Lord, from beginning to end, it is all found in and with the Lord, and freely offered from the Lord. With outstretched hands He stands ready to help, and He stands ready to carry up and over whoever will repent and believe, whoever will come to Him. Listen to how the God of salvation is described in Acts 5:31&32 with the exalted Saviour and poured out Holy Spirit. "*Him*" says Peter speaking of Christ Jesus, "*hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him.*"

Are you one who also trusts and obeys the gospel call, wisdom's call, in Proverbs and with Pentecost? And to encourage further in that gospel way, notice yet from Proverbs 1:23 as well as with Pentecost how the gospel way is not only so earnest, so emphatic, so encouraging, but also so embracing. That comes out in the last phrase of the text, "*I will make known my words unto you.*" See here what is further offered by the Lord, not only His Spirit to guide in the way, but His Spirit so working that the message be understood and internalized, received and believed, and lived by truthfully and triumphantly. As one put it, "the promise here is, as it were, 'I will not