

## Proverbs 9-10

We have in Ch 9 the picture of 2 women preparing a meal. One is where the simple learn the ways of wisdom & the other is the feast of fools. Lady wisdom is portrayed as a dignified woman of character & wealth preparing a banquet for the simple who would receive of her wisdom... Folly on the other hand is portrayed as a harlot inviting young men to partake of a sensual meal of stolen water & bread “eaten in secret”.

It's interesting to me that in large part sin's invitation to us is always “in secret”. There's something inherently shameful about sin (which is obviously why it causes guilt) & so it's appeal to us is to have it “in secret”, “no one will know”. Like we can gratify our lustful little cravings & no one will know the difference; no harm, no foul. That's why so much of what takes place as it pertains to sinful actions takes place at night. Because people feel a sense of false security under the blanket of darkness. Paul told the Thessalonians, “*For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.*”<sup>1</sup> As believers we're to live out in the open, we have nothing to hide, as a matter of fact we *want* people to watch our lives, we *want* people to recognize that we are the salt of the earth, light in a dark world, that Christ might be magnified & glorified in our lives.

But sin's call is always (generally) into the secret; tries to convince us we can get away w/it. But Jesus said, “*For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.*”<sup>2</sup> Don't buy the lie, walk in wisdom.

It's interesting as you travel through the proverbs you'll note that wisdom keeps reducing her call. At her 1<sup>st</sup> invitation (Ch 1) she appealed to the fool, the scorner & the simple. However the scorner rejected the call (mocks wisdom). At her 2<sup>nd</sup> invitation she appealed to the fool & to the simple, the fool rejected the call as well & here in Ch 9 she calls only to the simple. However the simple will reject wisdom's call as well.

When it comes to wisdom we can't waffle or wait to decide. We either accept God's wisdom, or we reject it, there really is no middle ground. Jesus (who became for us wisdom from God) said this:

<sup>1</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). (1 Th 5:7-8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>2</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). (Lk 12:2-3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

*"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."*<sup>3</sup> & Again, *"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other."*<sup>4</sup> We can follow the way of the world, or the way of wisdom, but we can't do both. It's wisdom or folly, Christ or sin.

### Vs 1-6

So once again we see the open invitation, "whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" There's more than enough room in the house & plenty of room at the table. Notice Vs 3, "She has sent out her maidens" & they're calling out to people to come join the feast.

Kind of reminds us of the many "banquet parables" that Jesus would tell. As a matter of fact let's leave Prov 6 & look together at [Luke 14](#) (15-24).

Of course this is why it's so important to respond to the invitation to feast in the kingdom of God, to receive J.C. when the offer goes out. Because you never know when it's the last invite you're gonna get. A lot of people think their lives will be ruined if they come to Christ, like salvation is a funeral; it's not a funeral, it's a feast.

Over & over again throughout the bible we find the idea of "spiritual food" being developed. The psalmist said, *"How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth!"*<sup>5</sup> The word of God nurtures our soul. Isaiah 55, *"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance."*<sup>6</sup>

Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."*<sup>7</sup> Of course Peter spoke of the *milk* of the word, Paul spoke of the *meat* of the word. You get the idea don't you? The *wisdom* of God is bound up in the *word* of God. We're to delight ourselves in the word of God.

Even the elements of bread & wine (Vs 5) point us to Jesus, don't they? The point us to the communion table, the body of Jesus broken, the blood of Jesus spilled for us.

<sup>3</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [\[Mt 12:30\]](#). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>4</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [\[Lk 16:13\]](#). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>5</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [\[Ps 119:103\]](#). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>6</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [\[Is 55:1-2\]](#). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>7</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [\[Jn 6:35\]](#). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Jesus said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him."*<sup>8</sup>

"Forsake foolishness & live" come to Christ, "go in the way of understanding."

### Vs 7-9

Do you embrace correction or repulse it, do you receive correction or reject it. That'll let you know which side of the fence you're currently standing on 😊. One man (Norman Vincent Peale) said that the trouble w/us is that we'd rather be destroyed by compliments than saved by criticism.

Our flesh doesn't enjoy being rebuked, doesn't want to be reproved. But the wise will benefit from both. We may not like it, but if we'll receive it we will increase in learning, we'll "be wiser still".

We spoke last time about needing a teachable spirit. It's those who "hunger & thirst" for righteousness that are filled. But the scoffer mocks correction. The wicked will hurl back at you & seek to belittle or somehow point out the faults of the one who's seeking to help them, trying to instruct them. The scoffer won't listen but will lash out at the one bringing their error to their attention.

To try & correct the scoffer only brings hate, harm & shame. He/she is hardened in their ways. It's mind blowing but it's true, some people will actually hate you for trying to give God's word to them; they won't receive it. They don't want to hear it, so don't waste your breath. There are some people that it's actually best to not even try to share w/them. Jesus called it casting pearls before swine; they just trample it under foot. Satan will always have someone to distract you so that you waste your time engaging them when there are genuinely hurting people all around us who are just grasping for hope.

You find someone who will soak up the principles/precepts of God's word, pour into them, spend time w/them, encourage & love on them. Those who are hardened toward it, pray for them, but don't waste your time, it'll only come back to hurt you.

### Vs 10-12

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." A lot of people are worried about safety & security; & that's good we should be. Because we are we get insurance on vehicles, our homes, life insurance, the whole bit...

<sup>8</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [Jn 6:53-56]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But how do people plan for eternity? What kind of insurance do people put in place for eternity? To try & navigate life apart from J.C. is foolishness. “The fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of wisdom.” In other words if you don’t fear God, you’re stupid! 😊

Now we’re speaking here of the reverential awe that is due Him, not being afraid in the sense of being squashed like a bug. God loves you, & you do well to honor Him w/your life.

But if you’re to walk in wisdom, the prerequisite is the fear of God in your life. That’s where it begins. You’re not wise at all until you at least fear God. Listen there’s lots of knowledge in this world, but very little wisdom (comparatively). Being able to appropriately apply knowledge, that’s wisdom. Doing the right thing w/that which we know. Insight on how to lead life is given in the personal knowledge of God. “Knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

Look at Vs 12 (Read). God wants to build godly character into our lives. But what this is telling us is that it comes through a personal relationship w/the Lord. We can’t borrow character from others, we can’t give character to them. It’s an individual matter, it involves individual decisions (good or bad). Being in a good family doesn’t guarantee good character or leading a life of wisdom. If you’re wise, you’re wise for yourself & if you scoff (you choose the fools path) you will bear it alone.

### Vs 13-18

The 1<sup>st</sup> 6 Vs is an invitation to enjoy the banquet of wisdom. The last 6 Vs draws attention to the feast of fools. Both wisdom & folly calls out to the simple to come & dine. Decision determines outcome. To turn toward the feast of fools winds up not at a feast at all, but at a funeral, your own funeral...

But you can see the lure of sin here. She calls out (the foolish woman), “Stolen water is sweet, & bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” She offers immediate gratification as opposed to the long-term satisfaction found in wisdom.

This mention of stolen water & bread eaten in secret is an allusion to illicit sexual interaction; clandestine activity (no one will know); suggesting that sexual immorality is really the height of folly or foolish activity. The invitation may seem attractive, however the end result isn’t life, it’s death (her guests are in the depths of hell).

So it’s wisdom (enjoying salvation), or folly (experiencing condemnation). It’s feast or funeral, the choice is yours.

## Ch 10

Beginning in Ch 10 we leave the invitation to wisdom & start getting the proverbs themselves. To be honest (we'll comment a bit along the way) there's not a lot to be said about them, they're fairly self explanatory; cause & effect kind of statements.

### Vs 1

Check it out, if the son does well, the dad's all, "That's my boy!" If he's foolish he belongs to mom! ☺ In truth the idea is that both parents experience grief or joy depending on the path their children take. John said, *"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."*<sup>9</sup>

### Vs 2-5

"Treasures of the wicked profit nothing", we brought nothing into this world & we can be certain we'll take nothing out. You're not going to offer God a billion dollars to let you into heaven. However "righteousness delivers from death." We spoke about this Sunday, the free gift of righteousness through the cross of J.C. imputed to us through faith in Him.

In Vs 4 we see the "slack hand". That can mean "slothful", or it can mean "deceitful"; you can't keep your reputation from getting around, if it's one of deceitful dealings, people just won't do business w/you. One who has a slack hand becomes poor, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. George MacDonald used to say, "God wants our best work, not the dregs of our exhaustion." Quality over quantity. We're to give God what's right, not out of what's left (be it of our time, energy, financially, whatever)

Vs 5 (Read). The idea here is that if you're wise, you'll strike while the iron is hot, while the opportunity is before you because if not it'll pass you by. Now listen, this applies not only occupationally, but also in ministry. Jesus said, *"Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!"*<sup>10</sup> The seed has been planted, it's been watered, people are ready to hear the gospel & be reaped in the harvest. Here's what I'm saying, God help us not to sleep/slumber in the time of the harvest. When's the last time you prayed w/someone, gave them encouragement from God's word, led them to Christ through prayer; it's harvest time, God help us to be diligent to gather in this season of harvest.

<sup>9</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [3 Jn 4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>10</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [Jn 4:35]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**Vs 6-11**

Remember when Jesus spoke of what's in the well of the heart is brought up through the bucket of our mouths? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

The mouth of the righteous is a well of life (words of edification, exhortation, comfort, wisdom & encouragement). His/her words are refreshing. Violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

The memory of the righteous is a blessing, it encourages us to think of those who've gone before us & lead a life set apart to God, it serves as a source of strength. But the memory of the wicked will rot. Who names their child "Judas", or "Jezebel"?

Now again, the wise in heart will receive commands (Vs 8), they're teachable. But a prating fool will fall. More interested in flapping their own jaw than taking the time to listen.

**Vs 12**

Hatred stirs up strife. Focuses on faults, makes mountains of molehills, constantly questions motives; refuses to forgive, hangs on in bitterness. Love (on the other hand) covers all sins. Love forgives others, overlooks faults & failures. Love says, "If Jesus covered my sin w/His blood, what right do I have to *expose* or *uncover* the sin of anyone else?" God will deal w/the wrong of others, that enables us to love them, to lay down our lives for the brethren. Write it down, look it up later Eph 4:29-32.

**Vs 13-14**

Wise people store up knowledge; they hold it ready for the right time & right occasion & it will help people out. But fools spout off all the time & are only getting themselves put in a bad situation.

**Vs 15-17**

"He who keeps instruction is in the way of life." Do you see how having a teachable spirit, being able to receive & respond appropriately to instruction is such a key in life?

We also see how God's justice is at work in the details of life. "The labor of the righteous leads to life, the wages of the wicked to sin." God keeps record; He knows, things may look one way now but in the end God will vindicate the righteous & judge the wicked.

**Vs 18-21**

Vs 19 is the Vs that inspires us to say, "Better to hold your lips & be perceived a fool than to open them & remove all doubt." ☺ It's wise to hold silent.

However the more we speak the more likely we are to sin... Now the tongue of the righteous is choice silver, no dross, of pure intent, free from hypocrisy. The heart of the wicked on the other hand isn't really worth much.

The lips of the righteous feed many, providing nourishment to the hearer. The fool (on the other hand) dies of spiritual malnutrition, lack of wisdom.

The bible has a lot to say about the dynamics & dangers of human speech; the idea here is that the wise person realizes the power of the tongue & keeps it under the control of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5 right? The fruit of the Spirit is self control, be quick to hear, slow to speak.

### Vs 22

The idea is that when God blesses, there are no regrets, no sorrow. When we choose the passing pleasures of sin it always brings regret, remorse & sorrow, not so w/the blessing of God, it's only joy, just blessing, no sorrow nor regret.

### Vs 23-25

You're like a tree planted by the waters that won't fear when heat comes nor will you cease bearing fruit. You have an everlasting foundation in Christ. Vs 24, "The desire of the righteous will be granted." David said that like this, "*Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.*"<sup>11</sup> What is the desire of your heart, go for it (taking for granted you're delighting yourself in the Lord), because God is the One who put those desires there. He placed it there & He'll bring it to pass.

### Vs 26-32

Again we're talking about the dangers & dynamics of speech. The mouth of the righteous brings forth fruit, the tongue of the wicked will be cut out. Like a branch that bears no fruit. The words of the wicked cause tension & trouble, the word of the righteous are helpful bringing positive influence & edification.

We do well to receive wisdom & reject foolishness; let's speak things necessary for building one another up rather than tearing one another down & God will be glorified in our lives. Amen? Amen.

### Prayer Points:

God help us to walk in wisdom, may we grow in our relationship w/You... Give us a teachable spirit & may we edify & encourage one another...

<sup>11</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [Ps 37:4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.