



January 22, 2022 Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

Wisdom's Call – Proverbs Chapter 8

"Now then, my children, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways.

Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not disregard it.

Blessed are those who listen to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.

For those who find me find life and receive favor from the Lord.

But those who fail to find me harm themselves; all who hate me love death." [Proverbs 8:32-36, NIV]



Wisdom's Call, Proverbs Chapter 8, begins a long presentation of proverbs. In the first seven chapters of Proverbs, "Lady Wisdom" admonishes the youth coming to the city for the first time to make wise decisions based on the Lord's guidance contained in the words of Lady Wisdom. Wisdom's Call in Chapter 8 summarizes the first seven chapters. We might phrase the scripture above like this: "I'll put it this way, you will benefit from following my teaching, and you will suffer a bad outcome if you don't."

Chapter 8 of Proverbs is one of those must-read-more-than-once portions in the Bible. Besides helping to build our understanding of God's will and our path, Wisdom's Call is one of the most beautiful poems in the Bible.

A Second Famous Poem: "A Wife of Noble Character", Proverbs 31

We would be highly negligent if we did not look at Proverbs 31:10-31, the famous description of an ideal wife. This is one of those sections of the Bible which might puzzle us. "Why is this in the Bible?"

Chapter 31 is King Lemuel's retelling of his mother's advice, making this section of wisdom literature the only one in the Bible written (or spoken) by a woman. In the 21st century we must be careful about layering our judgement on what might seem to us to be archaic attitudes. Yet, in this poem, we do learn something about the life of a wealthy family during these times. There were high expectations of the wife. Much of the passage speaks about the wife's business sense, her own quite distinctive and genuine form of wisdom. It's fair, then, to ask: "Who were these words for?" Answer - The woman's son, King Lemuel. Like the rest of the Book of Proverbs, this poem takes us back to the beginnings of Wisdom, a life rooted in fear of the Lord: "Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised." [vs. 30]

Here is our 21st century challenge: I read an essay on Proverbs 31:10-31 which stated in modern times we should interpret the "wife" to represent the "Church." When the poem speaks about noble characteristics, aren't those characteristics we want to find in our churches? Aren't those behaviors that we expect from our church? Take a moment to read Chapter 31, thinking in your mind that "she" is the Church. What does it mean for us if "We are the Church?" This question is most fitting as this week has been a week of prayer for Christian Unity.

Special prayers this week: healing for Mark, Elizabeth; the victims of recent shootings in NYC; for pandemic victims. Pray for unity in God's Church. "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us..." [John 17:20-21] Hear our prayers O Lord!
