

**PROVERBS | JESUS CHRIST: WISDOM PERSONIFIED**  
**PROVERBS 8:22-36; 1:20-33**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> STREET COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**SUNDAY, 24 JANUARY 2010**  
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**www.2ndstreet.org**

Welcome to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. If you've been here for a good long time, thanks for staying in the game. If you're newer to the flock, it's good to have you join in as well. I know there are many different churches out there - and I want to encourage you to believe that God has brought you here for a reason. When it comes to what you're looking for in a church that you can call "home", let me assure you that 2<sup>nd</sup> Street isn't perfect, but as I'm fond of saying, we're a casual church with a serious **MISSION**.

**Our MISSION: 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Community Church - Becoming More Like Jesus Christ By Loving God, Loving People, And Serving Our World.**

Over the past couple of years, when I've asked people about how come they've stopped grazing church-to-church, and made the decision to put down roots here at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, they've consistently said the same several things to me ... and your comments almost always comes down to some variation of these four things ...

1. 2<sup>ND</sup> Street's **MISSION** is clear and it connects with the spiritual priorities God is calling me to pursue.
2. I know that people are going to reach out to me, take an interest in me, and make me feel welcomed.
3. I know that whether I come to church on Sunday, or get involved in a Community Group, or do a serve project, that the focus will always be on seeking out the presence and the voice of Jesus Christ,
4. I know that God's **WORD** will consistently be taught verse-by-verse in ways that are understandable, and that connect with the specific needs I'm experiencing in my life.

Thanks for being part of what God is doing *in* and *through* 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. This morning we're continuing our four-month journey through *The Old Testament* book of **PROVERBS**. And in this third of twelve teachings, we're going to focus on the **PERSON OF WISDOM**. In the past two teachings I've shared with you the importance and interconnectedness of the three words that Solomon uses throughout **PROVERBS** ... knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.

1. Knowledge is taking God's **WORD** into our hearts and minds by reading it and/or by listening to it read and taught ...
2. Understanding is chewing on the portions of God's **WORD** that we've taken into our lives ... and
3. Wisdom is living out the instruction of God's **WORD** in the day-to-day circumstances of our lives.

And I see our **FIRST FAITH LESSON** for us in these three vitally important words ...

## FAITH LESSON

If you want to be *knowledgeable*, study God's WORD. If you want *understanding*, meditate on God's WORD. And if you want to be wise, apply God's WORD day by day.

And when you and I make the choice to do all three of these things, we'll find ourselves coming to maturity in Jesus Christ without having to learn everything through the painful method of "trial and error."

This morning I want to come back to the reality of **wisdom**, as expressed throughout the book of PROVERBS, and in fact, throughout the entire Bible. It's easy and natural to look at **wisdom** as a **THING**. And yet, as we'll see - or maybe as you've already begun to see in your daily reading of PROVERBS, **wisdom** is often spoken of not as a **THING**, but as a **PERSON**.

For instance, in PROVERBS 4:5, Solomon writes, "Get wisdom, get understanding" ... as though it doesn't have a voice of its own. But in other passages, **wisdom** speaks for itself for several chapters - talking about **wisdom's heart**, **wisdom's desires**, what **wisdom is longing for** ... and in the end, sharing with us the blessings we'll experience when we connect our hearts and our minds to **wisdom**. And in PROVERBS 8, **wisdom** actually identifies itself. Listen to Solomon's awesome description ...

### PROVERBS 8:22-29 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

<sup>22</sup> The LORD [God] possessed Me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old.

<sup>23</sup> From everlasting I was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth.

<sup>24</sup> When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water.

<sup>25</sup> Before the mountains were settled, before the hills I was brought forth;

<sup>26</sup> While He had not yet made the earth and the fields, nor the first dust of the world.

<sup>27</sup> When He established the heavens, I was there, when He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep,

<sup>28</sup> When He made firm the skies above, when the springs of the deep became fixed,

<sup>29</sup> When He set for the sea its boundary so that the water would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth;

I've said it before, but I'll say it again ... the world is looking for **wisdom**. Think back with me for a minute to the verses in JOB 28 we looked into a few weeks ago our the introductory teaching of PROVERBS ... where Job expressed that since the beginning of time, people have looked all over the heavens and the earth trying to find **wisdom**.

And do you remember Job's response to mankind's quest for **wisdom**? He said at the end of JOB 28 that **wisdom** itself will never be found in looking at things created or

made - that we have to look back past the genesis of all things and back to the Creator Himself ... because it was *WISDOM ITSELF WHO CREATED ALL THINGS*.

Matthew wrote his Gospel to the *JEWS*, emphasizing that Jesus was the *MESSIAH* and focusing on what Jesus *SAID*. And he traced Jesus' lineage from Abraham (the first Jew), up through David (the most-beloved King of Israel).

Mark wrote his Gospel to the *ROMANS*, telling them that Jesus was a *SERVANT* and focusing on what Jesus *DID*. And because servants in New Testament times didn't keep track of their lineage, Mark doesn't offer us a genealogy for Jesus.

Luke wrote his Gospel to the *GENTILES* telling them that Jesus was *the SON OF MAN* and focusing on Jesus' *HUMANITY*, and emphasizing what Jesus *THOUGHT* and *FELT*. And because Luke focused on the *HUMANITY OF JESUS*, he traces Jesus' lineage all the way back to Adam, the first human being God created.

And finally, John wrote the fourth Gospel to the *CHURCH*, emphasizing the fact that Jesus is the *DIVINE SON OF GOD*. And in nearly every verse John tells us who Jesus *IS* ... *GOD IN HUMAN FLESH*.

Because John wrote his Gospel to *BELIEVERS* in the *CHURCH* - emphasizing the fact that Jesus is the *DIVINE SON OF GOD* ... it might look like he didn't offer us a genealogy for Jesus. But he does. And his genealogy is found in the first three verses of the Gospel.

**JOHN 1:1-3; 14 (NEW CENTURY VERSION)**

<sup>1-3</sup> In the beginning there was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were made by Him, and nothing was made without Him.

<sup>14</sup> The Word became a human and lived among us. We saw His glory – the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father – and He was full of grace and truth.

John traces the genealogy of Jesus Christ all way back through time, to the reality that Jesus was eternally co-existent with God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit. That's some family tree! In **PROVERBS 8:22-29** Solomon tells us that Jesus Christ Himself is the wisdom of God, and John tells us in **JOHN 1:1-3** that the **WORD** of God is Jesus Himself. And in **FIRST CORINTHIANS 1:30a** the Apostle Paul tells us something else that is woven into the truth John speaks of ...

**FIRST CORINTHIANS 1:30a (NEW CENTURY VERSION)**

<sup>30a</sup> Because of God you are in Christ Jesus, Who has become for us wisdom from God.

The wisdom from God, **IS A PERSON, NOT A THING** ... and that person's name is **Jesus Christ**. And when we come into a relationship with God, Jesus Christ, the wisdom from God sets up residence inside of us. **Wisdom** is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And like **JOB 28** says, this is why it's ridiculous to look for wisdom in a **PLACE**, or in **THINGS**. Because it was the **wisdom of God** Who created **ALL THINGS**. I love how the Apostle Paul, the author of *The New Testament* letter written to the Christians living in the Asia Minor town of Colossae writes about this truth ...

**COLOSSIANS 1:16 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)**



<sup>16</sup> [Jesus] Christ is the One through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see - kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through Him and for Him.

The **SPIRITUAL** realm created the **NATURAL** realm, not the other way around. There are popular atheist authors today, like Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, and Christopher Hitchens (who spoke at the Schnitzer last week), who say that religion is totally man-made, and that Christianity, among all world-religions is false, foolish, and deceptive.

But let me say it again, the **SPIRITUAL** realm created the **NATURAL** realm, and not the other way around ... and no matter what Hitchens, Harris, Dawkins or a whole host of other modern-day, non-religion prophets purport, mankind will never find wisdom in the natural realm, because wisdom is found in the person of Jesus Christ, and in Him alone.

**ILLUSTRATION** ... God didn't just put all the elements of life together and then let them evolve. God made the universe with wisdom. When I build something I might have the **KNOWLEDGE** and even the **INFORMATION** to put it together, but it's the **APPLICATION** that's hard for me. And a lot of the time it doesn't look like it should when I'm finished. My son Ryan's tricycle comes to mind. But God doesn't have that problem. He created a world that **GENESIS** describes as "very good", but because of mankind's rebellion, sin entered the world.

I'm amazed at how many people have tried to do away with God. We have the **SETI PROGRAM** or the **SEARCH FOR EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE** which is a bunch of radio receivers positioned to the heavens looking for any pattern to the signals they're receiving to see if there's intelligent life out there trying to communicate with us.

And yet, when we open our eyes and look at the designs and the plans of God ... when we see all the patterns God has built into life ... we see that creation couldn't have happened by random chance. I mean, even the simplest cell isn't so simple.

In fact, the information content of a simple cell has been estimated at around  $10^{12}$  bits, comparable to 100 million pages of an encyclopedia. Creation is crying out that *THERE IS A GOD, A DESIGNER and A CREATOR*. But instead of looking at this truth, we're focusing on the heavens looking for intelligent life, maybe because it can be so hard to find it right here on Earth!

I love science. I married a mad scientist! But gang, it will always be God who breathes life and reason into science first. And when we allow that to happen, then science will begin to breathe life, hope, and reason in the reality of God.

Throughout the book of *PROVERBS* wisdom is often referred to as a woman, and with the pronoun "she". Why is that? I mean, if wisdom is actually Jesus Christ, then why is the *PROVERBS* nomenclature for wisdom so often feminine? It would be the understatement of the century to say that *SOLOMON WAS A LOVER OF WOMEN*. In fact, in *FIRST KINGS 1:1-3* we read that Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Okay, so he was *obsessed*. And God chastised Solomon about this obsession and there are other lessons for us to learn from this that we won't get into here this morning.

But the point I want to make is that Solomon wanted to get across the idea that just like a woman, **wisdom will reject with contempt anyone who mistreats her**. And that **wisdom cannot be neglected, ignored, abused, or taken for granted if we want to experience the blessings of knowing her**. Solomon wants us to know, that while wisdom is every bit a lady, just like God - wisdom is also jealous and doesn't look on us kindly when we're unfaithful towards her.

Remember "*The Transitive Property of Equality*"? It says "*IF A = B, AND B = C, THEN A = C.*" And this the *Algebra Postulate* came to mind because ...

In *PROVERBS 8* we read that wisdom is Jesus Christ. And in *REVELATION 19:13*, we read that Jesus Christ is also the **WORD of God**. And in *JOHN 1:14* we read that the "**WORD became flesh and dwelt among us.**" So wisdom is not only Jesus Christ, wisdom is also the **WORD of God**. Theology and Algebra collide!

Maybe you've noticed that there are lots of people who are in **relationship with Jesus Christ**, but they don't manifest **wisdom** in the day-to-day circumstances of their lives. Oh, you know somebody like that, do you? Maybe it's you ... or me! Just because someone has the **mind of Jesus Christ** doesn't mean they're consistently and wisely **LIVING OUT** the mind of Jesus Christ.

When we come into a relationship with Jesus the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our spirit and we receive **wisdom**. But we need **wisdom** to move from our **SPIRIT INTO OUR MIND** ... because that's where we can access it and put it into practice. And the

only way this happens is as we become disciplined in spending time in God's WORD. Here's what the Apostle Paul says about this truth in SECOND TIMOTHY 2:15 ...

**SECOND TIMOTHY 2:15 (THE AMPLIFIED BIBLE)**

<sup>15</sup> Study *and* be eager *and* do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing *and* accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.

Gang, as you and I become schooled by the Holy Spirit in the WORD of God, God's WORD is **TRANSFERRED FROM OUR SPIRIT INTO OUR MINDS**. And it's the wisdom of God in our minds that equips us, encourages us, and exhorts us to apply the wisdom of God's WORD in the day-to-day stuff of our lives. We'll still face temptations, trials, and challenges, just like everybody else. But the difference is that we'll have access to the wisdom of God - which is a resource that the world can't offer.

Remember that of the seven Hebrew words translated wisdom in PROVERBS, the most common is the word **chokmah**, and it means "that which is **pounded in**." God's WORD need to be **pounded into OUR HEARTS AND OUR MINDS** through daily study, prayer, meditation, and memorization. Because while wisdom **COMES INTO US** when we come into a relationship with Jesus Christ, it only starts being **LIVED OUT OF US** through the daily study of God's WORD. Are you hearing me?

If we're not taking the WORD of God **INTO OUR HEARTS AND MINDS**, and paying attention to the instruction to the wisdom of God that it speaks to us, then we can't expect there to be too much to draw on when we need it. Because when we're not inviting God to **pound His wisdom into us**, then when we get into times of temptation and distress, we won't be much different than people who don't even know Jesus Christ. We'll end up trying to depend on our own strength, on our own false wisdom, and on our own plans. And we all know from past experience where that's gotten us! Am I right?! Please turn back with me to PROVERBS 8 ...

**PROVERBS 8:30-32 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)**

<sup>30</sup> [God the Father speaking] Then I was beside Him [Jesus Christ], *as* a master workman; and I was daily *His* delight, rejoicing always before Him,  
<sup>31</sup> rejoicing in the world, His earth, and *having* My delight in the sons of men.  
<sup>32</sup> Now therefore, *O* sons, listen to Me, for blessed are they who keep My ways. [emphasis added]

Notice in v. 30, that God the Father rejoices in God the Son, Jesus Christ. But who does the Son rejoice in and find delight in? Look at the next verse. "**My delight is in the sons of men.**" **YOU AND I ARE THE DELIGHT OF JESUS CHRIST**. God delights in Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ delights in you and me. As the Creator of everything, Jesus Christ didn't just rejoice in mountains, or in porpoises, or in Black Walnut trees! Jesus Christ, the Creator God who created everything, saw that it was **all good**, and rejoiced in the sons of men! And v. 32 goes on ...

v. 32 ... blessed are they who keep My ways ... Notice here that it's one thing to listen to God's ways. But it's a whole different reality to keep God's ways. "Oh God, make us not only *hearers* of Your WORD, but *doers* as well. Help us live out Your ways ... to listen to You and then to put into practice what You tell us to do. Here's how Jesus and His ½ brother James write about this ...

**MATTHEW 7:24, 26; JAMES 1:22 (CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION)**

<sup>24</sup> Anyone who hears and obeys these teachings of Mine is like a wise person who built a house on solid rock.

<sup>26</sup> Anyone who hears My teachings and doesn't obey them is like a foolish person who built a house on sand.

<sup>22</sup> Obey God's message! Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it.

And I see a **SECOND FAITH LESSON** for us here ...

**FAITH LESSON**

**THE FOLLOWING IS AN UNCHANGEABLE SPIRITUAL LAW** ... You and I can't neglect God's WORD and expect the wisdom of God to be available to us when we want it. When we *sow wisdom* [live it out], we will *reap wisdom* [harvest and receive it]. Wisdom rejoices in the sons of men. But for us to benefit from the blessings of wisdom, we also have to rejoice in wisdom!

Please turn back with me to the last four verses of **PROVERBS 8** ...

**PROVERBS 8:33-36 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)**

<sup>33</sup> Heed instruction and be wise, and do not neglect *it*.

<sup>34</sup> Blessed is the man who listens to Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at My doorposts.

<sup>35</sup> For he who finds Me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord.

<sup>36</sup> But he who sins against Me injures himself; all those who hate Me love death.

Notice in v. 35 that wisdom won't just jump out from behind the door and attach itself to us ... we have to seek wisdom in order to find it. As I've already told you, the search for wisdom takes time and discipline. But oh, how great are the results of seeking wisdom out and finding it! Because when we discover wisdom, like it says here in v. 35, we find the favor of God. Please turn back with me to **PROVERBS 1** ...

**PROVERBS 1:20-21 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)**

<sup>20</sup> Wisdom shouts in the street, she lifts her voice in the square;

<sup>21</sup> At the head of the noisy *streets* she cries out; at the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings:

Look at v. 20. Where does wisdom live? Is wisdom stuck in the Armory all week when we leave ... getting re-activated when we come back next Sunday? Does wisdom stay locked up in our houses when we head off to work in the morning? Does

wisdom only show up when we gather in our Community Groups? Not at all. **Wisdom** lifts up her voice and shouts out at the top of her lungs **in the street**.

**v. 21 ... On the noisy streets, at the entrance of the gates, wisdom shouts out.** **Wisdom** doesn't hole-up in our churches, in our houses, or when we gather together or worship or serve! God calls us to take Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, out into the world, to let Him be heard, to let others see Him and hear Him through us. So let's stop living insulated, isolated lives ... safe and sound. Enough with trying to hide out from the world! When we love Jesus we can go into the world with compassion, with grace, with forgiveness, and with healing. When Jesus touched the leper, He did so knowing that He wouldn't get leprosy, but that the leper would get healed.

There's a poem called *Breathless Tales* by Janet Chester Bly that speaks to this reality. I've shared it with you before, but here it is again ... it's one of my favorites.

***BREATHLESS TALES***  
Janet Chester-Bly (1982)

I would rather wait my turn in party clothes,  
prim and proper, safe and clean.  
But a pulsing hand keeps driving me over peaks,  
ravines and spidered brambles ...  
so that one day I will pant up to the pearly gates ...  
tattered, breathless, and full of tales.

Gang, this sin-busted-up-world we live in is precisely why God so loved the world that He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, to die and be resurrected, so that people just like you and me could be saved (cf., [JOHN 3:16](#)). And it's into this hurting, wounded world that God sends you and me to proclaim Jesus Christ and the Good News of the Gospel ... that God came into the world through Jesus Christ in order to bring us **GRACE**, **MERCY**, and **PEACE**. Once again, it's the **GREAT EXCHANGE**.

We confess our sin to God and God gives us His **GRACE** ... which is His unconditional love that forgives our sin. It's the **GREAT EXCHANGE**.

We surrender our brokenness to God and God gives us His **MERCY** ... which is His unconditional love that takes away the pain of our sin. It's the **GREAT EXCHANGE**.

We learn to walk with Jesus day-by-day, moment-by-moment, and He gives us His **PEACE** ... which is His unconditional love that turns our fears, our worries, and our anxieties into contentment, joy, and blessing. It's the **GREAT EXCHANGE**. Do you see it?

This is why we don't come to church to **just get blessed**. We come to church to get filled up with God's **GRACE**, **MERCY**, and **PEACE**, so that we can go back out into the world for another six days and give out to other people what God has so graciously given to us. This is why the world needs you and me to not be afraid ... but to go out into the world with discernment and courage, because we have a single-hearted, single-minded devotion to His Son, and our Savior Jesus Christ.

**PROVERBS 1:22-23 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)**

<sup>22</sup> How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing, and fools hate knowledge.

<sup>23</sup> Turn to My reproof, behold, I will pour out My spirit on you; I will make My words known to you.

Notice the three kinds of people Solomon talks about in v. 22. *FIRST* he talks about the “simple-minded” or the “silly-foolish ones”. We might use the word “stupid” if it weren’t so offensive. And who are the “simple-minded, stupid ones”? It’s not the people who aren’t yet in a relationship with Jesus Christ. It’s the people who are, but who aren’t living like they are. In *The New Testament* the Apostle Paul calls these kinds of people “carnal, worldly, or fleshly Christians”, or Believers who seem to belong more to the world than to Jesus Christ.

**FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:1 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)**

<sup>1</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn’t talk to you as I would to mature Christians. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in the Christian life.

The contrast Paul is making here is that many Christians are worldly-minded, or are governed by the world instead of by Jesus Christ. And he’s saying, “brothers and sisters, this shouldn’t be so.” And I see a *THIRD FAITH LESSON* for us here ...

**FAITH LESSON**

If you’re in a relationship with Jesus Christ but still living like the world, according to the flesh, knock it off! You’re giving Jesus Christ a bad reputation, and you’re staying stuck as an “infant” in your faith, when God has such great plans to grow you up, mature you, and help make your life a consistent witness for Him.

As followers of Jesus Christ, when we try to straddle the fence, keeping one foot in Jesus Christ and the other foot in the world, it won’t ever work out, and we’ll just end up miserable. And we’ll probably make the people around us miserable as well. And Solomon says here that wisdom calls simple, foolish, stupid Christians *TO A DEEPER COMMITMENT TO JESUS CHRIST AND TO HIS WORD*.

The *SECOND* kind of people in the streets, who wisdom is calling out to are scoffers.

**PROVERBS 1:22-23 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)**

<sup>22</sup> How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing, and fools hate knowledge.

<sup>23</sup> Turn to My reproof, behold, I will pour out My spirit on you; I will make My words known to you.

Scoffers are people not yet in a relationship with Jesus Christ, and who scoff at and ridicule what they don’t yet understand. They love making fun of faith, and of the faithful. And gang, Solomon says here that wisdom calls scoffers *TO REPENTANCE*.

The **THIRD** kind of people in the streets, **wisdom** is calling out to are the ones Solomon calls the **foolish**. Similar to **scoffers**, **foolish** people are folks who are not yet in a relationship with Jesus Christ, but they don't just **scoff** and **mock**, they've really **turned their backs on God and on the WORD of God**. They aren't interested in truth, but they have no idea about the consequences of their rejection of God. And Solomon says here that **wisdom** calls the **foolish TO KNOWLEDGE**.

And notice in **v. 23** the two beautiful things God says will happen when any of these three kinds of people will turn their hearts and their minds over to Him. **FIRST, THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL BE GIVEN TO THEM**. And **SECOND, GOD'S WORD WILL BECOME UNDERSTANDABLE TO THEM**. Gang, we have to have God's Holy Spirit living inside of us before God's WORD makes sense to us ... before God can use His WORD to begin re-shaping us from the inside out in the family-likeness of His Son, Jesus Christ.

**PROVERBS 1:24-32 (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)**

- <sup>24</sup> Because I called and you refused, I stretched out My hand and no one paid attention;  
<sup>25</sup> And you neglected all My counsel and did not want My reproof;  
<sup>26</sup> I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes,  
<sup>27</sup> When your dread comes like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you.  
<sup>28</sup> Then they will call on Me, but I will not answer; they will seek Me diligently but they will not find Me,  
<sup>29</sup> Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord.  
<sup>30</sup> They would not accept My counsel, they spurned all My reproof.  
<sup>31</sup> So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way and be satiated with their own devices.  
<sup>32</sup> For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.

Some people quit coming to church for months, or even years at a time, but the minute calamity strikes they run back to the church for help. And when this happens people often expect to get a year's worth, or five, or ten year's worth of **wisdom**, growth, stability, and change, in one 20-30 minute conversation. They want **wisdom** and they need it right now. But Gang, that's not how it works.

And in these verses Solomon says that we can't depend on **wisdom** unless we've invested the time necessary for God to develop **wisdom** in our **HEARTS, IN OUR MINDS, IN OUR EMOTIONS, AND IN OUR ACTIONS**. In other words, God's **wisdom** works for us to the degree that we work at it. And in these verses **wisdom** warns us that when we refuse to listen to **wisdom** (that is, **when we reject Jesus Christ and God's WORD, WHICH ARE THE WISDOM OF GOD**), the day will come when calamity, dread, and distress will clobber us, and then it will be too late.

Some people ask, "Why does it take so long to mature in the LORD? I don't have all day!" But friends the question can't be "How long does it take?" The question has to be "How long will it last?" Yes the "way of the LORD" can be long and hard. But

it's always worth the discipline and the wait. Be patient and trust God. The way of the world is "easy come, easy go." But God's way is different.

**PROVERBS 1:33**

<sup>33</sup> But he who listens to Me shall live securely and will be at ease from the dread of evil. (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

<sup>33</sup> First pay attention to Me, and then relax. Now you can take it easy – you're in good hands. Make Insight [wisdom] your priority. (THE MESSAGE | emphasis added)

Followers of Jesus Christ face all the same challenges and problems that people who aren't yet in a relationship with Jesus Christ encounter. The difference is that followers of Jesus Christ have access to the **wisdom** of God to make it through the trials and tribulations of life ... and to come out on the other side of their trials stronger and more whole instead of weaker and more torn apart.

The **wisdom** of God isn't an idea. And the **wisdom** of God isn't just a philosophy. The **wisdom** of God is a person ... and His name is **Jesus Christ**. And the **wisdom** of God is also **God's WORD**, God's instruction manual for us ... and it's what He wants to use to equip us and prepare us for every situation life will throw at us.

**NEXT SUNDAY ...**

**PROVERBS 6:1-5; 22:26-27 ... WISDOM AND FINANCES**

**COME PRAYING AND EXPECTING!**