

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, August 28, 2024

Proverbs 1:20–33

20 Wisdom calls aloud outside;
She raises her voice in the open squares.
21 She cries out in the chief concourses,
At the openings of the gates in the city
She speaks her words:
22 “How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?
For scorners delight in their scorning,
And fools hate knowledge.
23 Turn at my rebuke;
Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;
I will make my words known to you.
24 Because I have called and you refused,
I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded,
25 Because you disdained all my counsel,
And would have none of my rebuke,
26 I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your terror comes,
27 When your terror comes like a storm,
And your destruction comes like a whirlwind,
When distress and anguish come upon you.
28 “Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;
They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me.
29 Because they hated knowledge
And did not choose the fear of the Lord,
30 They would have none of my counsel
And despised my every rebuke.
31 Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way,
And be filled to the full with their own fancies.
32 For the turning away of the simple will slay them,
And the complacency of fools will destroy them;
33 But whoever listens to me will dwell safely,
And will be secure, without fear of evil.”

Wisdom’s Urgent Offer

Main idea: the urgent offer of God’s wisdom demands a decisive response from
us.

Introduction: an enticement to be warned against (v10), but now enticements to which to open our eyes/ears, and to which to respond.

1. **“Obvious” enticement**

1. Though saving knowledge of God can only be had in the Word, and ordinarily within the church, wisdom calls aloud publicly.
2. It is obviously needed in society, in economics, and in government (v20–21).

2. **Urgent enticement**

1. “How long” has an implied correct answer: “no longer! It has been too long already!”
2. Just as the apparent power to be a destroyer in v12–16 turned out to be self-destruction (v18–19), so also all resistance to or despising wisdom/knowledge turns out to be self-ridiculing.

3. **Personal enticement**

1. Although metaphorical wisdom is a lady, here, we do know that the actual wisdom of God is a person. Not a lady, or even a mere man, but a person of the godhead in whom the infinitely, eternally, unchangeably wise triune God displays Himself: the Word, God the Son.
2. The instruction to turn (v23a) is an offer to receive God’s own Spirit (v23b) and be conformed to God’s own mind and character (v23c).

4. **Saving enticement**

1. God’s wisdom urges us to that which would spare us from calamity, terror, destruction, distress, and anguish (v25–27).
2. The metaphorical “laughing” in v26 is a reminder that there will be a double-justness of what comes upon those who were offered the wisdom of God that would have spared them but refused (v24). Hear and heed the offers of God’s wisdom; they offer deliverance!

5. **Limited-time enticement**

1. You don’t know when the opportunity for wisdom will be withdrawn (v28).
2. The harder you make yourself against God’s wisdom (v29–30), the more you will abandon and isolate yourself to your own ways and ideas (v31).

Conclusion—the great dilemma of enticement: The whole option of life is summarized in v32–33. Either listen to and receive the offer of God Himself in Christ Himself, or perish. Turning away and complacency have the same outcome here. Scripture demands a decisive response.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something

confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Proverbs chapter 1 verses 20 through 33. These are God's words. Wisdom calls allowed outside. She raises her voice in the open squares. She cries out and the chief Concourses. At the openings of the gates in the city. She speaks her words. How long you simple ones? Will you love Simplicity?

First Coroner's Delight in their scoring and fools hate knowledge. Turn my rebuke. Surely. I will pour out my spirit on you. I will make my words. To you. Because I have called and you refused. I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded because you disdained, all my counsel and would have none of my rebuke.

I also will laugh. That's your Calamity. I will mock when your Terror comes. When your Terror comes like a storm. And your destruction comes like a whirlwind. When distress. And anguish. Come upon you. Then they will call on me but I will not answer. They will seek me diligently but they will not find me.

Because they hated knowledge and Did not choose the fear. Of Yahweh. They would have none of my counsel, and Despised my every rebuke. Therefore, they shall eat the fruit. Of their own way. And be filled to the, With their own fancies. For the turning away of the simple will slay them.

And the complacency of fools will destroy them. But whoever listens to me, Will dwell and will dwell safely. And will be secure. Without fear. Of evil. Amen. That's ends this reading. Of gods inspired and And Aaron tort We were warned last week in verse 10. My son, if Sinners entice, you do not consent.

And we spent some time in the following verses, Uh, studying noticing The different ways that our own sin. Uh, tempts us and Recognizing, when others? Are reinforcing that Temptation being also themselves a Temptation to us so that we could get the when parked down when Sinners entice you so that we could get the what to do in that case, Bart down.

Not consent. Give that strong. No. Uh, say no to sin when it offers itself and when it seems so So tempting or desirable for the reasons. We won't re-preach that entire sermon now, but now there's another enticer. There's another one trying to get our attention and offering benefits and urging us to, to hear.

And to heed and to come along and this one is wisdom. Which is personified at this point, or given in metaphor at this point as a lady because in a couple chapters, he's going to compare the lady wisdom with the loose woman. Now, the loose woman wants you to To come out, come aside in secret and private.

And there are many dangers there that we will. That we will consider when we get there, but one of the things That we find here first about the, the good enticement of wisdom is that it's an obvious enticement. It's an open enticement. So we'll consider that first. In verses 20 and 21.

Secondly, we'll consider how urgent. The enticement of wisdom, is the invitation. Of wisdom is, if you don't like The negative connotations that may come along with the word enticement. But the urgency. Of wisdom's enticement, wisdoms offer, wisdoms Invitational, consider in verse 22. And then it's also a personal Enticement in verse 23.

And that it's a saving enticement in verses 24 through 27. But a limited time. Enticement. In verses, 28 through 31. And then finally, that the great dilemma. Uh, meaning two options and you must pick one of them. And not picking is. To pick. Uh, one of them just pick the wrong one.

But the great dilemma, then the, the great choice between the two things in verses, 32 and 33 first, then the how obvious it is, wisdom calls aloud outside. And calls allowed in the street just as God has made himself known in all of the things that were made and has shown so much about his own wisdom and power and, and goodness.

And so many other aspects of his divine nature, uh, in the things that were created. And even made his divine nature made the his own reality, that God is, and that he made us and that in him. We live and move and have our being. He made all those things obvious to every one of us.

The ungodly actually have to work, whether they admit it to themselves or not. They have to work to suppress to push down on the truth in unrighteousness. If they are going to escape Giving God glory and giving God. Thanks because we know that he is God. And it is the the Condemnation against us in Romans 1, that, although, we knew him as God, we neither glorified him as God nor give him, thanks so also, God has made our need for wisdom obvious.

Everywhere we go and everything, we do, especially in The streets and the squares in society. Relationships, require wisdom. And this is all the more true because We're Sinners. And even more true when you are in. In relationships with unbelievers, all the relationships with Believers requires, a lot of wisdom.

And so wisdom is urging us to pay heed to the word of God. To come aside to where God gives us his instruction. Gives us his words, his world announces to us that we need his word. There's much that we can learn. From about his world from his world but we need to know him.

We need to fear Him. Remember, it was the fear of Yahweh that was the beginning of knowledge. And, and in verse 29 of our passage, this evening, rejecting wisdom is to uh, hate knowledge by not choosing the fear of Yahweh. So so what we hear here in this obviousness obviousness of wisdoms enticement is that, whether it's in society and in the different relationship Dynamics and there's probably economics implied there as well in the street and in the square and in the In the chief con courses.

We're now moving into government. You know, places. Maybe in. The city walls at that point and certainly the openings of the gates in the city is a reference to where Governmental decisions. Judicial decisions are made all having to having to live in society having to Having to conduct economic transactions and interact with others.

In that way having having to function in government, or under government, or some combination of the two, all of these things cry out to us. Don't you see how badly you need the fear of Yahweh? That man by himself with the wisdom that he has in himself. He he cannot be effective, he cannot be fruitful, he cannot be joyous, he cannot Thrive.

So far as so long as he is. Resisting the instruction of God's word and resisting the knowledge of God himself. You need to know the Lord. How often something has gone awry in one of your relationships. Something has gone awry in in your productivity, your interaction with others, your interaction with authority.

You need the fear of Yahweh, you need his word, you need his salvation, you need his son and Union with him to know yourself to be right with God and forgiven and to know that God is for you, you need his instruction to know what the differences are that his thinking and his word makes and how you live What pleases him?

And it's so obvious that we need his word. That we need to listen to him. And this is in its own way. A sort of proof for total depravity, isn't it? And the need for regeneration that we would be made spiritually alive. Because God has Placarded the whole world.

And our whole lives with our need for him. And yet, Even those who are believers, even you who know him and belong to him, and are forgiven and righteous, as Justified as you're ever going to be in glory, Yet you often find yourself. Don't you coming sluggishly or not at all?

To his word and private worship or family worship. Or maybe even the public worship. And so we see how obviously we need God's wisdom and it's not just an obvious enticement. It's an urgent enticement that's behind this question at the beginning of verse 2, how long How long will you do this?

Don't you yet see that it is self-mocking and self-destroying that it consumes your life? And instead of instead of making you flourish and Thrive and filling you with joy and strength, making you a blessing to others and enjoy blessedness before. God, how how long are you going to do that?

It is as silly and foolish children. As if. Uh, you came of around the corner wondering what that sudding was. And you found a brother or sister or someone else just standing there and smashing their head on the wall. We have an English expression. I'm I was beating my head against the wall.

Someone uses that phrase to talk about how he was doing something that wasn't working and couldn't have worked, it was foolish. It was irrational but he kept doing it until he came to his senses and realized that it was foolish and irrational. Well, it is foolish and irrational to try to live life apart from listening to the one who made us apart from listening to the one who offers himself to us.

In, part through the instrumentality through the use of his word, which, which uses to give us faith in Christ and to grow our faith in Christ. And to try to live apart from listening to him, apart, from coming to his word, and trusting him by his Spirit, to take that word, and apply it to our thoughts, and apply it to our affections, and apply it to our choices, and our desires to try to live apart from that is to be our head against the wall.

And so the question that implies that, that makes that how long you simple ones, this isn't simple. And sometimes the word simple means uh, um, Sometimes the English word simple. This this Hebrew word does not mean this. Uh, I mean can mean like single-minded right? Uncomplicated by Different motivations or or priorities or there's there's a way in which we use the word simple in a positive way.

This is not a positive use of the word simple. This is the use of the word, simple. Meaning someone who doesn't understand enough to operate properly. They're naive. They are not taking into account, all of the all of the information and all of the ideas that are that are necessary to walk in a healthy or productive.

Or upright manner. So, how long you simple ones? Will you love Simplicity? So so not listening to God. He says or she in this case is the wisdom personified as a woman. At this point she says, is to love being naive. That no one loves to be naive. You know, this you've probably

been in a situation where it seemed like everybody else, knew some things that you didn't know and it was kind of painful and embarrassing to think that you were naive and you maybe didn't even ask some questions that you could have and should have asked because you didn't want people to find out that you were naive.

Well, praise God. You don't have to be naive. He's given you his word. He's even giving you people in your life that he has sent and appointed to teach you his word so that you can ask the questions. People whom he has designed and commanded to love you. And who in most cases?

At least for you, you should be grateful to God. This isn't true for everyone. I really do love you. And you don't need to be embarrassed. You shouldn't. Certainly shouldn't love to be naive. To actually desire, not to know. So that you can continue being ignorant. Lacking the information that you need.

To live wisely to live. Well, How long you simple ones, will you love Simplicity for scorners Delight in their scorning? They are treating things as small, they are mocking or scorning. The truth about God. And they think that they have something all that they have is, they're mocking all that they have is they're scorning, it's it's self ridiculing.

And fools hate. What do they hate? I hate being taught. I hate being told having an authority over me. I hate spending time. Having to learn You know, make all these complaints and our souls and we Grumble against it. It costs effort, it makes me feel small. I am small.

It's okay for me to feel small. I am small You know, you have all these But what we really hate. If we fall into any of those ways of thinking, I hate knowledge, And it's not just, I hate knowledge, knowing stuff, knowing things. Knowledge is personal. It's I hate knowing God more.

I hate understanding, not just his world more and his word more but him more and myself more And how to operate according to his word in his world more.

So, we Think that? We don't want any more wisdom. I have as much as I would. Like, thank you very much. But with wisdom herself here and the metaphor urges us how long? How long will you do this turn? Now don't spend any more time like that don't spend any more time naive.

Don't spend any more time being a scorner. Don't spend any more time hating knowledge. Realize that what God offers to you. Is to understand better who he is, who you are how to live, as one who belongs to him. Uh, what he offers to you. To no longer be a scorner, or a mocker thinking that you are putting other things down, when you're really just making a display of yourself.

Adult and delighting in your scoring. Don't spend any more time doing that. Don't spend any more time resisting knowledge. Choose the fear of Yahweh choose to begin in knowledge, choose to live as his and to walk with him. And so the enticement is obvious. It's announced, it's announced. In so many different ways.

Everywhere we go. It's urgent how long. It's also personal. Wisdom now, says turn my rebuke. Surely, I will pour out my spirit on you. Will make my words known to you. And now there's a little bit of a blending here because wisdom is currently being given in the metaphor as a woman.

But one of the things that we are going to learn, especially by the time we're done with chapter eight, is that wisdom is also a person. And a Divine person. A person who creates with God and is the Delight of God from all eternity. So that when we get to, John chapter 1.

In the beginning was the word, the Logos, which is a little bit more than what our word word means. That Jesus is the wisdom of God. The Divine son is the wisdom of God, God, the Father Son, and Holy Spirit. The Triune God is infinitely. Eternally unchangeably wise. It's not like the second person is wise in a way that the first or third person is not, no God has one wisdom.

And yet, he especially expresses that wisdom in his son. And there's a personal offer here. Where wisdom, which we are going to come to find? Is not just an abstract concept, but something inherent to God himself in his character and expressed, especially by God himself in the person of his son.

Now comes and says, I will pour out my spirit on you. Not just that, wisdom will teach us. But that wisdom will take of himself. And by his Spirit start to make us to be more like himself. I will pour and I will make my words known to you.

Now, his word is a way in which he reveals himself, he conveys himself. And now his word will be something that we come to know and we come to understand there's there's relation here. It's a personal invitation. So that we can't. We can't come to the wisdom of God as a way for us to be exalted in ourselves.

Many wish for knowledge, many wish for wisdom, so that they can feel better about themselves or be more admired by others or get a leg up on others. But here, God offers to us as wisdom. That we may be conformed to him that we may relate well to him.

That our mind. May be conformed to his mind so that our mouths are conformed to as it were his mouth. And his words start to shape the way we think. And his words start to form, even the way that we speak. Oh, how we have wished? Sometimes that we were a little bit more eloquent.

Probably, every one of us have desired that and in some context. Well, the Lord comes and he says, I will make my words known to you. You see, there's the eloquence of the super Apostles that the Corinthians We're so impressed with, and there's the eloquence that Learns by the light of the knowledge.

Of of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ to speak. Plainly the words of God. And there's that. That Simplicity not naivety like we had earlier with that word, there's that Simplicity of forthright. Plain upright, wise Bible speech, The farmer or the janitor or the, the housewife who's walked with the Lord and been been marinated in their Bibles and in faithful preaching for decades.

And they just have. That straight, good speech because God has made his words known. To. It's a personal enticement to be conformed to God. One of the places where you may have desire wished that you were more eloquent is in prayer. We're gathered here tonight, aren't we to pray?

And we want God to give us his spirit and we want him to make known to us his words. We even thanked him and asked before we began that his Spirit helps us in our weakness. When we come to pray, because we do not know how to pray for what we are.

We don't know what to pray for and whatever we do know to pray for, we don't know how to pray, how best to pray for it. And yet his Spirit helps us. And then his Spirit also intercedes for us. And here, he gives us this personal invitation. In the school of God's wisdom, you don't get certificates of achievement.

You get the personal knowledge of him and to be made more like him. To speak more like he does. It's obvious enticement and Urgent. Enticement. A personal. Entitlement saving enticement. When verse 26 says, I will laugh at your Calamity. I will mock when your Terror comes. It's it's still speaking poetically.

This isn't Turning lady wisdom into a scorner. What it's saying here is that The Calamity of verse 26, the terror of verse 26, and verse 27, the destruction and distress and anguish of verse 20. These are all things that God's word would spare you. These are all things out of which God's word would deliver you.

He doesn't speak to you to bother you. He doesn't speak to you to burden you. He doesn't speak to you to make you feel more miserable about the wrong ways that you are thinking and the wrong ways that you are feeling in the wrong ways that you're living. He speaks to you to deliver you from your misery.

To redirect you into that, which is safe and good, and right, and strong and productive and glad and a blessing to others and to yourself.

So that this is a kind and generous enticement. Oh, you've learned because you interact with Sinners. That when they try to get you to do something and they urge you to do something, there's often an ulterior motive and it's not necessarily what's best for you. There's some costs involved.

Or some harm. Some negatives involved. Put it that way. There is a cost, you have to respond. He calls you to be diligent to spend time to give yourself Zeal effort. But there's not a negative. There's not waiting for the other shoe to drop. There's not an ulterior motive in God.

That is somehow against you. Or in his wisdom. No, his wisdom offers you all of these things. He didn't have to give you his word. He didn't have to offer you his work. If you had by your own foolishness, come into Calamity and Terror and destruction and distress and anguish.

It would be right and it would be just and it would be deserved. But isn't a doubly. So, If God knowing our frame, And, We not knowing. That we are so foolish and, and in danger of making these great mistakes with our lives and we just, uh, we just careen along.

As as if there's no destruction, up ahead. And he's urging us. Pleading with us, to listen to him, to slow down to change, our our thoughts to more match. His And our priorities and the way we evaluate things. The choices that we make and what we enjoy or desire.

I mean, he gives us. All of that in his word. If we don't, listen, If we don't take the time to hear, In the first place. And then we don't heed what we hear in the second place. Do you not see how it's in that way that it says?

That Muslim wisdom will then laugh or mock. The idea is, it'll be doubly. Just You can think of that in corporate terms and then bring it back down to application to your life. Isn't this something that we instinctively at least and maybe a little bit more deliberately as we think about it?

Isn't it something that we think about our nation? Very few nations in the history of the world. Have had not just such access to God's word. But such Heritage. Of those who have known it and who have taught. Doctrinal foundations upon which philosophical foundations were built. And yes, corrupted by Or intermingled with that, which is corrupt.

At every stage. It's not like America descended from Heaven as the Morning Star. But don't we? Don't we see what we are doing. As a not just falling into Folly, but a rejection of a wisdom that we have had And say that it is therefore more doubly. So and self-doubly just and self-mocking for us.

To go careening into the disaster. Well, the Lord comes to us, wisdom comes to us. In our passage this evening and says, Is it not so for me, and for you? Who know better? Even than America generally speaking. When we have had opportunities to listen and we haven't taken Or we have had opportunities in which we heard.

But we walked away from the mirror. And we forgot our face. We're hearers only and not doers. Oh, it's a saving enticement. Comes out of compassion and generosity. It would spare us the disaster in its limited time. Limited time enticement then. Lady wisdom says in verse 28. Then they will call on me but I will not answer.

They will seek me diligently but they will not find me. There are two things. Going on here. One is that God doesn't owe us his word. He doesn't owe us opportunity. To read it. He doesn't owe us opportunity to be taught. Well, Jonathan Edwards, at one point was Uh, two different points.

He was ejected from a congregation, but On one of the occasions. He had one last sermon to preach. And he preached from a text on how They would answer. Each for the other. What they had done. With one another at the Judgment. That they would not get to sit under his preaching anymore.

And that there might come a day when In this life one, they will wish that they had opportunity again but the Lord will have taken it from them. And that certainly in the next they will give answer. God's servant stood before them. He told them his words. Upset with him for it.

God doesn't owe us. The opportunities that we have. And not only, Might he take them away and we do not know. It's not too much of a stretch to imagine a day in the not too distant future. When the hate speech of the Bible, As it is. Considered by many already.

In the surrounding culture and even in seats of government above us, Is outlawed. And the written word is hard to come by. And preaching must be done in secret. If a faithful preacher can be found at all. We do not know what opportunity. We will have. But not only that, which we See in in part, in verse 28, but The more we resist his word.

The harder we become. Against it. The more we become abandoned and isolated to ourselves. So in verses 29 and 30 because they hate to acknowledge and did not choose the fear of Yahweh, they would have none of my counsel and despised my every rebuke. Okay. So there's an instrumentality here of how they have previously responded to God's word therefore, they shall eat the fruit of their own way and be filled to the full with their own fancies.

So after they have spent enough time, rejecting the word of God and refusing to, to be corrected and rebuked, and shaped and sharpened by the word of God. What's the result of that? Well, they become so full of their own ideas. There's actually no room for any wisdom now.

They become, they develop an immunity. To instruction and rebuke. So that they get to the place where they feel like they need it desperately, they call they seek But they're unable to obtain. I will not answer. They will not find why. Because they're filled to the full with their own fancies.

That's frightening. In some ways that's more frightening than Terror and destruction and distress, and English. It's not a bad prayer for us. Lord do not let me be filled to the full with my own fancies. Make me soft-hearted. Give me. Give me that habit of mind and heart before you that I am correctable and teachable and instructable that I can grow by your word.

That I can be turned out of Harm's Way by your words.

Which brings us at? To the great dilemma. Of enticement. So we have the enticement of sin which we are warned against last week in verse 10, my and following my son of Sinners entice, you do not consent and then we have this wonderful pleading enticement of wisdom. That is obvious, and Urgent and personal, and saving and offered first for a limited time.

And now we get in verse 32. The two options. Option number one. Sounds like two different options of its own, but it's really just the one. Verse 32 for the turning away of the simple will slay them. And the complacency Of fools will destroy them. To not choose the fear of Yahweh.

Second part of verse 29 is the same as hating knowledge or the turning away of the naive. So, this turning away. Just being kind of neutral or ambivalent. Is the same. Or at least leads to the same end. The complacency. Of fools will destroy them. We're going to see a couple of places in the Proverbs where the lazy man dies with his hand buried in the dish.

Because he Blocks the will the desire the diligence to bring the food to his mouth.

That's what's happening, spiritually, isn't it? The second part of verse 32, The complacency of the fool. The word of God has been presented to him. He has his opportunity to hear it or maybe he has heard it. And he's just complacent. Wax the gumption. To do something about it, to make a change in how he thinks or his affections or priorities desires Pleasures.

So that's option. Number one. That's the one we don't want. That's the one that slays you or destroys you. Like the self-destruction we heard about last week, Here's the option. You do verse 33. But whoever listens to me, Will dwell safely. And will be secure. Without fear of evil.

It's a wonderful condition to which the Lord is bringing all his own that we had in our Isaiah passage today. Or you will have in your Isaiah passage today if you if you hadn't done it yet. Where all of the curse has gone all the sin is gone. Or the danger is gone.

And there's just the joy The joy of the Lord himself the joy of his wonderful New Creation. The creation over, which God rejoices, but Over, which is, especially made us to Rejoice because he's rejoicing over us. Or whoever listens to me, he says, Will dwell safely and will be secure.

Without fear of evil. Oh, listen to him. Take every opportunity you can. To listen to him. He proclaims himself to you throughout his word proclaims himself to you in Christ, says he'll pour his Spirit upon you. And make his words. Known to. Listen. To him. Amen.