

Proverbs Week #9 (1:20,21)

Proverbs 1:20,21

Wisdom shouts in the street, she lifts her voice in the square; at the head of the noisy streets she cries out; at the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings: How long....

As we continue our study in the book of Proverbs, today's two verses focus our attention on Wisdom personified as a woman. She shouts in the streets and proclaims her message to those who are in the city gates. Now, Wisdom cries out "how long..." and you might wonder what comes next. We will continue to talk about this in the next few weeks. For now, we are going to try to answer the questions where does Wisdom teach, and what do these verses teach us?

The streets where she is teaching are said to be noisy. She lifts her voice and shouts her message. In biblical times people met in the streets to sell and buy the things that were needed for daily life. Today we go to grocery stores to buy food and we buy clothes and most other things in department stores. The city gates were places where the affairs of daily life were transacted. They were the places where disputes were settled and people went to seek advice. In the city gates the elders of the city would sit and people went to them to ask them to help solve their problems. Today, people often go to lawyers to help them settle disputes in court. Politicians try to make decisions to improve and regulate behavior in city council meetings, in state capitals, and in Washington DC. So, if the woman Wisdom were to speak today would she raise her voice in Safeway, Fred Meyer, the state capitals, or courts of law? Maybe...

God reveals the truth about Himself in many ways and in many places. We learn in Psalm 19 that the very creation proclaims God's glory on a daily basis. Our Bible is the inspired word of God and gives us records of history, wisdom, prophecy, and songs. These are the source materials that make up part of the message that Wisdom proclaims. God has done wonderful things in and through His people. As we live out what we know to be true, our lives and words can be like Wisdom and help others around us who need to hear God's good news.

As I studied these verses I thought about the noise that everyday life creates that drowns out the voice of God in our lives. In simple terms, the media, business world, and even the thoughts in our head can be incredible distractions. Just as a loud radio or an MP3 player can block out important instructions (like mom or dad asking you to do something) so too all the noise in the world can distract us from hearing the wisdom that God wants to teach us.

I mentioned these verses in Psalm 19 earlier and I'd like to read them to you now. These verses remind us that if we can stop every day and look around us, then we can listen to the wisdom that God reveals about Himself in all the things He has created.

Psalm 19 1-6 "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; it rejoices as a strong man to run his course. Its rising is from one end of the heavens, and its circuit to the other end of them; and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

In the next few weeks we will continue to look at the message that Wisdom is proclaiming. We will study about an invitation and a warning. As families, read together this first chapter of the book of Proverbs and we will continue our study together.