

June 28, 2020

“Feast With Wisdom”
Lesson 4 of Unit

Proverbs 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18

Intro

Back in the 1970’s, TV personality Steve Allen developed and starred in a show called “Meeting of Minds.” Using historical documents for accuracy, Allen created a discussion between himself and usually four people from distinctly different historical periods. The format allowed for a discussion of ideas from people who had a significant impact of world events. It begs the question: if you could sit down with four people from history and talk to them about events and issues, who would you like to have there?

Today’s study is sort of like that, except there are only two other people besides you in the discussion: Wisdom and Folly. Wisdom invites us into her house, prepares a meal, and gives advice intended to change and improve the lives of those who listen. But Folly is also ready to make a pitch for you to join her. Which leaves us in a fairly familiar position: Who will be allow to be our hostess, with the understanding that the one we choose will change our life?

Read Proverbs 9:1-6

1. What is being suggested that Wisdom herself built her house in vs. 1? What is being suggested by the use of pillars, and the fact that there are seven of them?
2. What does the imagery of a meal in vs. 2 tell us about the meeting Wisdom wants to have with her guests?
3. What two methods in vs. 3 does Wisdom use to get people to her meal? What might “the highest places” tell us about her efforts?
4. Who does she specifically call to dinner in vs. 4-6? Why them?

Read Proverbs 9:8-10

1. Who are the two groups being rebuked in vs. 8? Why do they respond so differently?
2. What allows the wise and righteous in vs. 9 to respond the way they do? What is the unstated lesson of this verse for us?
3. In vs. 10, God is described as “the Holy One”. What does this mean about God? What does it mean for the believer to be “holy”?

Read Proverbs 9:13-18

This section offers a contrast to Wisdom. Here Folly is also presented as a woman calling to the people, but with a different goal in mind.

1. In vs. 9, Folly is described as being loud or unruly. Look up “folly” in a dictionary if needed; what connections do you see between the definition of folly, and why she might be loud or unruly? How else is she described? How do these qualities contrast with the descriptions of wisdom that we’ve seen so far?
2. How do the actions of Wisdom (vs. 1-2) and Folly (vs. 14) contrast, and how are those contrasts significant?

3. What is different between what Wisdom (vs. 4-6) and Folly (vs. 15-17) call to passing people? What do these differences tell us about how Wisdom and Folly are opposite of each other?

(Note on Verse 18. This verse is a warning to those who might listen to Folly's call. People are warned that listening to her leads to death, as opposed to the life promised by listening to Wisdom (vs.6). Since all will die, death here seems to be more like "ruin" or "destruction", rather than physical death. This would then make "life" in vs. 6 equal to "success" or "satisfaction".)

Application: In a world like ours, there are multiple options in a lot of areas. Which car do you want? What color? What options? Or which brand(s) of cereal to you buy and stock your cupboards with? And the list goes on...lots of options. But spiritually speaking, today's lesson offers an "either – or" choice. Only two. Choose to listen to wisdom, or listen to folly. Proverbs doesn't provide another alternative. Wisdom is based on the solid foundation of God's truth. Folly appeals to people's baser, usually sensual, instincts. It doesn't sound hard when phrased like that. But we are called daily to make a choice between these two voices in choosing which path we will follow.

Prayer: Father God, thank you for the wisdom found in Your Word. Please forgive us where we haven't listened to it or followed it as we know we should have. Please give us grace and strength to follow the way of wisdom more perfectly this week. In Jesus' name, Amen.