

I'll be reading Proverbs 8 this morning.

Proverbs 8.

Does not wisdom call?

Does not understanding raise her voice?

On the heights beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand.

Beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries aloud.

To you, O men, I call.

And my cry is to the children of man.

O simple ones, learn prudence.

O fools, learn sense.

Hear, for I will speak noble things, and from my lips will come what is right.

For my mouth will utter truth.

Wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

All the words of my mouth are righteous.

There is nothing twisted or crooked in them.

They are all straight to him who understands, and right to those who find knowledge.

Take my instruction instead of silver."

and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than jewels and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.

I, wisdom, dwell with prudence and find knowledge and discretion.

Fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.

Pride and arrogance in the way of evil.

In perverted speech I hate.

I have counsel and sound wisdom.

I have insight.

I have strength.

By me, kings reign and rulers decree what is just.

By me, princes rule and nobles, all who govern justly.

I love those who love me and those who seek me diligently find me.

Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness.

My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold, and my yield than choice silver.

I walk in the way of righteousness in the paths of justice, granting an inheritance to those who love me and filling their treasuries.

The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work and the first of his acts of old.

Ages ago, I was set up at the first before the beginning of the earth.

When there were no depths, I was brought forth.

When there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth.

Before he had made the earth with its fields or the first of the dust of the world.

When he established the heavens, I was there.

when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.

And now, O sons, listen to me.

Blessed are those who keep my ways.

Hear instruction and be wise and do not neglect it.

Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors.

For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord.

But he who fails to find me injures himself.

All who hate me love death.

Thanks Lee.

Got two more weeks in Proverbs, this week and next week.

And I'm grateful that Solomon decided to end this intro on a positive note, or a couple positive notes.

There we go.

Yeah, so we've been looking at some heavy stuff throughout the intro here, the first nine chapters of Proverbs, and really we don't want to forget the forest for the trees.

We don't want to forget that really Solomon's endeavor, his main goal, what he's trying to do is to help us or help his sons, but us, you know, through his sons, value wisdom, desire to get it,

And really to work hard at getting wisdom above all else.

To strive for wisdom first above all the other things that you could strive to get in this life.

So he gives some warnings.

He looks at the negative side.

But then he ends here in chapters 8 and 9 in particular, largely on a positive note.

So let's pray and ask for the Lord's help this morning to help us see his glory through wisdom and the beauty and truth of wisdom.

Heavenly Father, again, would you open our eyes to see great and wonderful things in your word?

primarily about you, Lord.

We pray that you would help us to know you as our creator, as our savior, as our Lord, all of these things that you've given to us and revealed to us here in Proverbs 8.

Lord, we just ask that you would keep us attentive, working hard to see you and know you and to gain wisdom, trusting that you will make good on your promise to deliver those things to us.

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

All right, I normally start light and then get heavy, but we're going to start heavy right out of the gate today.

So I hope you had your coffee and that you're awake and ready to go.

So a little philosophy to start here.

Thomas Clinus, Thomas Clinus, all right, heavy already, lived in AD 1225.

He died AD 1274.

He was a philosopher, theologian.

He once wrote kind of in the introduction to his Summa Theological.

So he's like, I'm going to give you guys a brief summary of all of theology.

And it's like,

12 volumes, like very heavy volumes.

And we actually read in college the Summa of the Summa, or the Summary of the Summary, and that was like 700 pages.

So there's nothing, you know, summary about it.

I was like, you know, I was expecting Cliff Notes, and we got this.

But at the intro to that, he wrote that he thanked God that he fully comprehended and understood every page he had ever read.

And I was like, I don't know who this guy is, but I don't know.

I'm not on his level, right?

We live in totally different worlds.

But Aquinas helpfully established and kind of articulated, actually a little bit more simply, some of the stuff that had already been discussed throughout church history since Jesus and Paul were on the earth, explaining the significance of Jesus' coming and his death and resurrection.

and just some of the theology that had been around since the beginning of time that God revealed about himself through creation, he helped kind of compact these things down a little bit and make it a little bit more easy to understand.

One of the ways he did this was he identified and articulated three transcendentals that characterize God, or three things about God's character that are kind of unified and observable in the world around us.

So they're true first and foremost about God,

and his character, but there are three things that tend to be grouped together and kind of come together as a package deal in creation, in the things that God made.

So they reflect God's character.

They're like a part of God's character that he's infused to the world around us.

And that is the good, the true, and the beautiful, right?

So that typically the good, the true, and the beautiful, they come together as a package deal.

It's also, they're also a big deal.

And one of the reasons they're called transcendentals is that we, you know, transcendental just means, you know, it's above us.

You know, if God's transcendence is that he's other than us, he's bigger, he's better, he's smarter, you know, he's, he's, he's,

outside of us.

Whereas like his imminence or his intimacy would be like, he, no, he, or his condescension, like he is one of us.

He wants to be intimately related to us.

So transcendental is like big picture, you know, cosmic God and good, true, beautiful being like some of the biggest that you can think about and comprehend about who God is.

Another thing that makes them transcendental, though, is that we long for all three, right?

We want truth.

We want goodness.

We want beauty.

We want to both experience them, like we want to see them, have them near us in our possession, and we also want to be them, right?

We want to be true.

We want to be beautiful.

We want to be good.

And even when we're bad, it's because some...

In some way, our understanding of true, good, and beautiful was distorted.

So we never really do things, even horrific things like suicide and things like that, merely for the bad.

We always think we're doing something good by doing them.

We'll never do something that we think is going to be worse for us than better.

That's a whole other discussion.

So we desire, though, the good, the beautiful, the true,

And that's something that we long for.

It's built into us.

God built it into us as a part of his creation.

And Aquinas observed all of these things, like I said, in the world around us, but he also observed them in passages of scripture like Proverbs 8, that the true, the good, and the beautiful seem to be kind of all a part of like this argument or this flow of thought about who God is and why we ought to pursue wisdom and what role wisdom had with God and creation.

So if we sum all that up, or we look at that in Proverbs 8, we'll see that the good, the true, the beautiful are accessible to us through wisdom.

In other words, wisdom is our way of getting into and experiencing the true, the good, and the beautiful.

You're all trying to get in.

We're all trying to get in to the true, the good, and the beautiful.

We want more of that in our life.

We are trying to get more of that for ourselves because that's what we were made to do.

God wants us to get as much of the true, the good, and the beautiful into our life as possible.

Our problem is we think we can find it in cars and sex and money and fame.

We think that's our way in.

Proverbs 8 is telling us wisdom is the way into those things.

and they're primarily found in God.

Or another way to put it this morning is wisdom rooted in the fear of the Lord is our access to the true, the good, and the beautiful, all right?

And the reason I'm bringing them up is because I really think Solomon had something like this in mind as he sectioned out this proverb, all right?

So he talks about truth for a little bit, then he talks about justice and righteousness or the good, and then he talks about

the foundation of the world, and he paints this beautiful picture of God delighting in creation and the beauty of creation.

So it seems like all three of these things were kind of on Solomon's mind in one form or another as he broke up this proverb.

So we'll start with the truth, because that's where Solomon starts.

He starts with true.

In addition...

to the proverb kind of being broken up, true, good, beautiful.

He's also showing us the value of wisdom.

So here, when he's talking about the truth, he talks about wisdom being valuable to mankind.

And then in a second, when he starts talking about righteousness and justice, he talks about wisdom's value for kings and rulers, right?

The greatest or the most powerful among us.

Not necessarily the best, but those who exercise the most authority.

And then he talks about wisdom's value to God as God delights in the world and as God established a beautiful foundation for the world.

So it's another way to think of this proverb and how it's broken up.

So true, good, beautiful for us, value for man, value for rulers, value for God alongside those things.

All right.

I feel like I'm flying this morning.

You all right?

We good with this pace?

We're following?

All right.

Sometimes I get a little hyped up on coffee or truth.

I don't know what it is.

I haven't had that much coffee today.

And I just get going.

So...

You know, you could do this, like slow down or repeat that, and I'll repeat it, and we'll keep going.

We'll just make it interactive this morning.

All right.

True.

First thing we see here is that the truth is accessible.

The truth is accessible.

This is something we've seen through a lot of the introduction here, but Solomon reiterates it, and he kind of reiterates it in a different way.

So look at verses 1 to 7.

Does not wisdom call?

Does not understanding raise her voice?

On the heights beside the way, at the crossroads, she takes her stand.

Beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals, she cries aloud.

To you, O man, I call, and my cries to the children of man.

O simple ones, learn prudence.

O fools, learn sense.

Hear, for I will speak noble things, and from my lips will come what is right.

For my mouth will utter truth.

Wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

So wisdom, truth is standing at the gate here.

You know, when Jesus stood before Pilate, not necessarily at the gate, but before the judge's bench there in John 18, 37, Jesus replied to some of Pilate's questions.

He said, you say that I am a king.

For this purpose I was born, and for this purpose I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth.

Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.

Pilate said to him, what is truth?

Alec Baldwin has that phrase pulled as a quote from this passage tattooed somewhere on his body.

I don't remember where.

It was in an interview that he did.

Yeah, who cares?

On his arm somewhere.

I don't know.

But he pulled it out because he identified with Pilate, mocking Jesus.

What is truth?

You came into this world to bear witness to the truth.

How can we know truth?

And that's where a lot of our culture is today.

We're like the scoffers in the book of Proverbs.

Many of us today prefer to deny that truth exists rather than to obey it or to fall in line with it.



And we laugh at those who believe that truth does exist.

But what Solomon's showing us here or telling us here is that truth isn't hiding.

It's not under a bush somewhere.

It's plain to see.

It's calling out.

and it can be found.

It's in the crossroads where everybody's having conversations about reality and what's important and how we ought to help fix this world.

It's right there in the gates where everybody's at, calling out, saying, I'm here, right?

I'm here to be found.

And the places where ideas are exchanged and people come together, it's not even like you go out into the woods, which is, again, a common notion, and you just meditate on your navel for hours.

And all of a sudden truth comes to you, right?

Truth is in the midst of creation and especially the pinnacle of God's creation, people, human beings, right?

It's there to be found.

It calls to all the children of men and thank God for you and me, even the simple and the fools, right?

That she's calling out not just to the smart, not just to the intellectual, not just to those who have high IQs, but she's calling out to the simple, the fools, just like you and me.

And the call is specific.

The call is specific in verses 6 and 9.

She says, Here, for I will speak noble things from my lips, and from my lips will come what is right.

In verse 9, They are all straight to him who understand, and right to those who find knowledge.

I'm sorry, verse 8.

All the words of my mouth are righteous.

There is nothing twisted or crooked in them.

They are all straight to them who understands, right to those who find knowledge.

This wisdom...

is found primarily in the clarity of words.

Again, not in silence, not in impressions that are given off by nature, but the clarity of words.

Words, speech, the written word, are all a gift from God to help us go deeper into wisdom and truth.

It's one of the things that sets us apart from the rest of creation.

Yeah, animals communicate through clicks and sounds and stuff like that, but it's a very fundamental, rudimentary communication.

There's nothing, it's not even close.

It's not even the same galaxy as the type of communicating that we're capable of doing through words.

Not only can we communicate about like solid things, but we can communicate about abstract ideas and actions.

And like, this is a massive ability and gift from God, words, speech, language, to help us know not only just the world around us, but like God himself and to know ourselves in

and to know other people around us as well.

There's a lot of joy and enrichment that comes from the precision and the depth of words.

So I would encourage you, and this is an encouragement to myself, don't neglect in growing in your comprehension and use of words, right?

I think we've shrunk from like back in Jonathan Edwards' day when he wrote,

Freedom of the will and some other things is only a couple hundred years ago right in in the in the u.s The average vocabulary was like 45 50,000 words It's dipped below 10,000 now right the the average vocabulary dip below 10,000.

That's like 40,000 possibilities of having a clearer view on reality right the world around us and reality and

And I'm not just like bellyaching.

I'm just saying that we ought to fight that a little bit, right?

Maybe going along with the flow and just being swept with the current isn't the best move there.

So read, right?

Read.

I'm preaching this to myself too.

I don't read enough.

It's easier to turn on a show, right?

But read, expand your vocabulary, talk to others.

God's truth and wisdom opens up to us through the clarity and the precision of words.

Listen, music is an important part of our worship.

We're commanded to sing.

We're commanded to play instruments in the Psalms, right?

It's an important part of our worship.

But don't neglect the words that we sing to God and one another.

The music is there to accompany the words, to remind us that we ought to feel a certain way about the words when we're not feeling the way we ought to feel about the words.

But the words are important, right?

They're central.

They're pointing us to God, reminding us about his character and who we are before him.

Again, like I said, our culture is moving and almost like self-awarely moving towards the use of images to communicate.

It's just neglecting words and just embracing, you know, wordless signs, wordless books, wordless all kinds of stuff, right?

And there's definitely a trend in the church to prioritizing the sensational and the spiritual experience over the Word of God, where the Word of God is kind of used as water to prime the pump of the spiritual experience.

We're all here for the experience, and we'll read a couple verses out of context to get the experience juiced up and going.

The experiences are important, right?

I'm not saying that they're not important or legitimate or a part of our life together.

And experiences appeals to different senses are important, but they're subservient to the word, right?

We run those things and we test those things by the word, by the clear and precise revelation of God through his word.

All right.

A lot of talk about words, but words are important, right?

We're told right up front, wisdom's coming to us by the vehicle, wisdom and truth are coming to us by God's chosen vehicle of the word.

So wisdom is our access to the true, right?

And that's coming to us primarily through words, but also wisdom is our access to the good, right?

To the good.

And Solomon uses the words justice and righteousness quite a bit.

And I think that those are subcategories or kind of synonyms for the good.

And he does that by showing us also the wisdom's value to rulers and kings.

Let me read, I'm going to read 10 to 21 again and just listen, listen for this language of love and hatred.

It's kind of important and I'll tell you why in a second.

So verse 10, take my instruction instead of silver and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than jewels and all that you may desire, all that you may desire cannot compare with it.

I, wisdom, dwell with prudence and I find knowledge and discretion.

The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.

Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

I have counsel and sound wisdom.

I have insight.

I have strength.

By me, kings reign and rulers decree what is just.

By me, princes rule and nobles, all who govern justly.

I love those who love me and those who seek me diligently find me.

Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness.

My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold, and my yield than choice silver.

I walk in the way of righteousness and the paths of justice, granting an inheritance to those who love me and filling their treasuries.

Did you notice the language of love and hatred there, especially verses 17 and 21?

I love those who love me and those who seek me diligently find me.

And 21, granting an inheritance to those who love me.

When it comes to the good...

When it comes to all forms of justice and righteousness, we have to talk in terms of the heart, right?

We have to talk about what we love and admire.

When it comes to justice, the question is, are we gonna love ourselves and advancing our own interests at the expense of others, or are we going to love doing right by other people?

Or righteousness, are we gonna love ourselves and our ways and our preferences, or are we gonna love God

and his ways and his desires for our lives and the world around us.

And of course, when it comes to loving something, it also demands, every time we love something, there's a demand that we hate something else.

Like I love my kids, right?

Love my kids.

I am going to hate anything that is going to harm or destroy them, right?

So when we love something and we move in love to something else, there's a corresponding like equal and opposite hatred

for the opposite, which is why in verse 13, Solomon writes, the fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.

Like the fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.

Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech, eye, wisdom, lady wisdom, hate.

Loving the Lord means hating that which perverts his glory in the world around us.

Perverts or hides his glory in the world around us.

whether that's in us, whether there's sin or evil in us, diminishing and hiding and perverting the glory of God that's been instilled in us or the world around us.

We hate to see God's name belittled.

We hate to see his glory marred and besmirched.

We love to see him lifted high and receiving all the glory and honor that he's due.

So the good, and in particular, justice and righteousness,

always involve what we love and admire, which is why loving and wisdom is the means to justice.

We've kind of been searching for this, especially within government and kings and rulers for thousands of years, right?

Like, let's please just get a ruler that loves truth and loves justice.

Did you notice, though, in verses 15 and 16,

The by me's in 15 and 16.

By me, that's Lady Wisdom again, kings reign and rulers decree what is just.

By me, princes rule and nobles all who govern justly.

All we really want is a government that knows what's true and real and rules justly and fairly, right?

And it's a wonderful thing when a government establishes justice in society and upholds truth.

That's what God intended for it to do.

That's what he made it to do.

That's what he still calls it to do.

But you can't fake justice and righteousness.

You can't.

It's too complicated.

There's too much discernment needed.

True justice and righteousness has to begin at the heart level.

You can't fake it.

And the path to that, so the path to having justice and righteousness at the heart level is loving wisdom, is hating pride and arrogance and selfishness,

and loving truth and wisdom.

So, yeah, I'm not going to say any more about that.

Let the word speak for itself.

So as we, though, love truth and wisdom, there is a necessary sense, or there has to be a necessary understanding, too, if we go one level deeper, of the world's beautiful foundation.

So one of the things that draws us into a love for justice and a love for righteousness is knowing and seeing and sensing and living in

the world's beauty, right?

The beauty of the world that God's made.

And as we look at the world's, or as Solomon presents like the world's beautiful foundation, he draws attention to the fact that wisdom was valuable to God.

God valued wisdom when he made the world and founded the world.

So he primarily shows us that by setting up or telling us about wisdom as a workman on which the world was founded.

Look at verses 22 to 30.

The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old.

Ages ago, I was set up at the first before the beginning of the earth.

When there were no depths, I was brought forth.

When there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth.

Before he had made the earth with its fields or the first of the dust of the world.

When he established the heavens, I was there.

When he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above and he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limits so that the waters might not transgress his command.

When he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him like a master workman and I was daily his delight rejoicing before him

Always.

We have this long description of creation drawing our attention to its foundings.

And you can almost picture the mountains and the sea and the fields, right?

The plains all before us and we're looking at them.

And Lady Wisdom is saying, I was there, right?

I was there before these things and I was there to help found and bring these things forth.

And verse 30 even says that she was the master workman

which kind of carries this idea of completeness, that she was there by God's side as like this daily, there all of the time workman.

So again, you could probably translate it like constant workman.

There wasn't anything that happened at creation where she wasn't there with God establishing the foundations of the world.

Now, Lady Wisdom is not an actual person, right?

She's a personification of one aspect of Christ's character, wisdom.

So it's a metaphor, it's a literary device to help us understand and comprehend and wrap our mind around God, or in particular, Jesus's wisdom.

However, Jesus, the actual second person of the Trinity, who is his own person, even though he's triune with the Godhead, right?

He was there with God and was God.

We see this in John 1, 1-3.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

So while we're taught in Scripture that

to explicitly think of God and think of Christ as being specifically masculine.

It's also good and right to think of some of the virtues that emanate from them, that come from them, as having feminine qualities and characteristics, such as lady wisdom, right?

Men and women made in the image of God, made to image God, right?

So we, as men and women together, image God.

One of the ways that women image God, apparently, right, is by being the personification here of wisdom.

Christ also likens himself to a mother hen, right?

Looking to bring the chicks of Israel under his wing, right?

There's a lot of times where God adopts feminine qualities as a part of his character and demonstrates that we together, men and women, image him.

So anyways, back to the point here, lady woman or lady wisdom, not woman, that's whatever.

Lady wisdom is metaphorically beside God at creation.

What does that mean, right?

So we're supposed to picture here, Solomon's painting this picture of lady wisdom standing beside God as he's creating the world.

What it means is that there's an order and there's a logic to the world.



It's not random or idiotic.

Deep down, we know this, right?

Deep down, we know there's an order and there's a logic to the world.

And we even accept it when it comes to natural laws.

We just accept natural laws like gravity, the third law of thermodynamics, all that stuff, as a understood, ordered, reasonable part of the physical world that we live in.

I mean, that's what science does.

That's what it's based on.

Science seeks to discover and prove

repeatable laws in the physical world around us.

Nobody's arguing with gravity, nobody's arguing with the third law of thermodynamics.

If you do attempt to argue with them, you're not going to last long, right?

And we rightly feel, we rightly feel, and I think this is true of all of us, that if there are natural laws around,

then there must be laws and there must be an order also within us, right?

If there's natural laws and there's order outside of us in the world that's around us, then there ought to be laws and an order within us as people.

So we create fields and disciplines such as psychology and sociology, and we attempt to discover those laws and that order through those disciplines.

The problem with most psychological and sociological disciplines is that we come to those disciplines with the assumption that people

and our inner life and our social life are just like the world around us in that they're flatly physical, right?

That they're flatly, people are just chemicals and electrical pulses, and we're just what we can see and measure and demonstrate.

We either deny that a spiritual or a moral reality exists, or we believe that if there is a spiritual and a moral reality, that it's subjective and really unimportant,

And everybody kind of makes up their own moral and spiritual reality.

Now, I say that, and there is sociology, there is psychology being done by people that don't believe that, that I think is on a much stronger footing.

But much of what we're reading here today begins with those basic assumptions, right?

Some basic assumptions that I would argue are faulty, not just from a biblical standpoint, but also from a natural law standpoint.

So however, though, right?

Scripture, specifically Proverbs 8, argues that if there are laws and absolutes in the physical world around us, why wouldn't there be laws and absolutes in the spiritual and moral realm as well, right?

If there's laws and absolutes that we see, we can demonstrate around us, there ought to be, we would expect to find laws and absolutes, morally speaking, and in the spiritual world.

It's kind of a strange form of schizophrenia that tries to deny this kind of continuity and harmony in all that exists, right?

In all realms and facets of life.

By joining together, right?

By joining together in this proverb here, Proverbs 8.

truth and justice, and the consistent foundations of the natural world, right?

That's what Solomon's doing.

He's saying, seek after wisdom.

It's true.

Seek after wisdom.

It's just and right.

And seek after wisdom.

The world, the mountains, right?

And the streams and the ocean were founded on wisdom.

By bringing all of those under the same umbrella, Solomon is saying that there's a consistency in

And there's a harmony to God's created world that, quite frankly, ought to be plain for all of us to see.

Because deep down, we all want to see it.

John Calvin wrote, I'm sorry, I got behind here.

John Calvin, I didn't write, I didn't put Calvin in there.

You'll just have to listen to him.

There's not one little blade of grass.

There's no color in this world that is not intended to make men rejoice, right?

The world's foundation, the world's foundation is ultimately delight.

Look at verses 30 to 31.

And then, or then I was beside him like a master workman and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children

of men.

His delight.

You know, what's the refrain of Genesis 1?

What's the refrain of Genesis 1?

And God saw that it was good.

What's God doing there when he says that?

And God saw that it was good.

Is he making sure that we all know that it's good?

No.

Moses could have just told us, and it was good, right?

He didn't have to say, and God saw that it was good.

Is God doing work in that statement?

Is he actually making it good?

Is he like, I made some stuff and now it's good because I said it's good.

That's not what he's doing.

He's delighting in his creation, right?

He's pausing.

He's stepping back.

He's taking it in.

He's enjoying the goodness, the truth, and the beauty of what he's made because beauty, goodness, and truth are the foundation of all that's made, right?

All creation.

And God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit existed before creation in this eternally happy dance of love and joy that was so powerful and overwhelming that they were moved to create the world, not because they needed something.

God didn't create the world because he needed a bunch of people to tell him how great he is.

He created the world out of an overflow of his happiness and his joy and delight that he had prior to creation.

So as he's creating, you just see him expressing joy and delight in all that's happening, right?

In all that he's doing.

Because creation itself is an overflow of joy.

It's an overflow of truth.

It's an overflow of goodness.

It's an overflow of beauty.

Wisdom, and what Solomon's telling us, is wisdom is our way into that dance, right, that the Trinity has been having for all of creation.

Wisdom is how we get in and experience it.

If you want to stay on the outside, live any way you want, right?

Like, if you want

to just get good vibes and, you know, pleasurable experiences now, live any way you want.

If you want to get in, right, with the God of the universe, the eternally happy God of the universe and experience that kind of joy and that kind of satisfaction, then read his word and live wisely.

All right, now I'm preaching, I guess.

Wisdom's our way in.

What is wisdom again?

We just need a quick reminder before we head out, right?

So yes, wisdom's in, I wanna get in.

Where do I start?

Well, Paul tells us, remember, in 1 Corinthians 1, 22 to 24.

For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and follow to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

The first step into wisdom is wisdom.

the first step into the dance, is the most important.

We must see ourselves.

We need truth.

We got to see ourselves as God sees us, as sinful, broken, rebellious people deserving of destruction.

And then recognize that the only way to be reconciled back to God is to make the relationship right, or the only way to make the relationship right is to accept Christ's payment

on our behalf.

If you try to earn your way in, you're not getting there, right?

It's the way he's been made, the way back to being reconciled with God into the joy and happiness of his presence and being with him forever is paved by his son as a free gift, right?

He took the punishment that you deserved and he's giving you the life and the restored relationship with his father that you can never earn yourself.

And then after we've been made right, right?

That, that,

You never get beyond that.

I'm not talking about moving beyond that.

But there's an outworking of that, of the work that Christ has done for you that happens as we live day to day.

And as we live day to day, we must live wisely.

We've got to live in step with the law and order that God established when he created the world.

Part of Proverbs 8 means that the rules, the laws that Solomon had been describing in chapters 1 to 7

regarding cosigning on loans, sexuality, laziness, greed, etc.

Part of Proverbs 8 means that all of that stuff is as real and as solid and as consequential as gravity.

And some would argue that it's even more so.

And as sure as you are that if you jump off the roof of the Empire State Building, that you're going to splat on the ground, you should be even more sure that if you step outside of God's plan and his laws and his design for sexuality or money or relationships, that there's going to be harmful and destructive consequences in your life.

But the good news, right, the good news of Proverbs 8 is that there's a design, right?

There is a design.

There is a design and a plan for you and your sexuality and your money and your relationships.

It may not feel like it right now.

It may feel like everything's haywire and that how could this possibly be a good thing?

Why do I want this so bad when it's such a mess?

There is a plan, right?

There is a design that you can step into and live into, and it's tremendously good, and it's tremendously true, and it's a tremendously beautiful design, as beautiful as God himself, right?

So we need to get serious.

Let's get serious.

This really, you know, I was thinking about it today.

This whole series on the book of Proverbs has really been one big long plug

for us to go to Sunday school.

Let's get serious about living within that wisdom, right?

How are we gonna get the wisdom?

Are we gonna get the wisdom watching the Cowboys documentary?

Not really, there might be a little bit to glean from there, you know, as far as making deals and stuff.

But we're gonna get that wisdom, we're gonna get into it,

By studying his word together in Sunday school, in small groups, in Penny's Bible study, right?

In one-on-one discipleship, by being in the word on a regular basis and being in the word with one another, working it in and having that communicated, not just to our heads, but to our hearts as well, right?

We need it.

We need it.

And you're not gonna get enough.

I'm just telling you as your pastor and one of the elders of this church, you're not gonna get enough just here on a Sunday morning from the pulpit.

My goal, honestly, when I come and preach is not first and foremost to impart as much wisdom and instruction to you as possible.

The goal is to worship Jesus and to worship God and to present him so that you are motivated to go home and read the word.

and to grow and to come to Sunday school in these other places and grow in knowledge and in wisdom.

Those other places are designed to help you grow in wisdom and to just find out what the Bible says.

You know, like we go through like an Old Testament survey and we're like blowing through books, but that's just to help you get a basic understanding of what it says and then go deeper in other places as well.

Get wisdom.

We got one more week.

One more week to persuade you that wisdom is more valuable than gold, more valuable than jewels, more valuable than anything else, and that God is shouting, right?

He's shouting about his wisdom through the world around us.

And we're gonna sing one more song and worship him for that here in a second.

Let me pray.

Heavenly Father, you are awesome beyond all measure.

Lord, even words, as great as they are, and we talked about how great they are today, don't do you justice or the wisdom that you demonstrated in not only establishing the world, but in governing history, sending your son to rescue your people, rescuing me, rescuing others in this room as well.

Lord, we're just in awe of your wisdom, your character, your love, your justice, just all that you are.

And Lord, there's nothing more we can say than just how great are you.

And bow on our faces in awe and reverence of you.

Lord, would you help me, would you help us to live like it the rest of the week?

to put you first, to seek you more than anything else we chase in this life, to love everything else in this life for your sake, knowing that they're good gifts given to us by you for our joy and your glory.

And Lord, would you start that now as we sing together?

We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Let's stand and sing.