



Sunday, July 13, 2014

The Unity of Wisdom

Speaker: Joe Boot

Scripture: Proverbs 3:1-26

Sermon Notes:

1. The book of Proverbs is presented as a journey into wisdom, because we can never reach a point where we have attained “enough” wisdom.
2. Wisdom is not “out there” as if it were some abstract form. It is practical and to be lived out. This is a key difference between the Greek and Hebraic worldviews.
3. Wisdom is not an esoteric discipline, attained only by an elite few. It is to be sought by everyone.
4. The nature of wisdom: it is (a) from God, not dependent on our IQ; (b) more than the accumulation of information; (c) part of who God is.
5. We imitate God when we apply ourselves to wisdom.
6. Wisdom is associated with creation (v.19; cf. Proverbs 8:22-31).
7. This shows us that the created order is not random.
8. God’s structures are built into the fabric of creation, and we have the privilege of discovering them.
9. The implications of this for education are significant. We do not invent wisdom by self-realization, but discover it as a revelation from God.
10. Creation has been subject to a curse since the Fall, but the wisdom of God is in the process of re-creation.
11. The wisdom of creation is revealed to us *before* the wisdom of salvation. Christians often forget this order.
12. Anything that does not come from the wisdom of God is folly.
13. The body is a marvel of unity in diversity.
14. Many people resent that God provides the structure and order of all things, but it is this structure and order that allows us to live and move.
15. The wisdom that made all things is the same wisdom that we are to apply in our lives.
16. We need to be *taught* wisdom. Nobody is born wise.
17. The gift of wisdom that brings life and peace is mediated in the most elementary of ways: father to son.
18. We have now not merely a creational relationship, but a covenantal one.
19. The journey into wisdom is a hard road. It is easier to do things in the way of folly.
20. Binding the covenant law around our necks is the opposite of being stiff-necked. We are to be easily turned by the wisdom of God, away from evil and folly.
21. In our folly we presume that we know better than God, whether in explicit rebellion or implicit disobedience.
22. Giving via our tithes and offerings is a counter-intuitive way to apply and obey wisdom. This is not the world’s way to get wealth.
23. Like precious stones, wisdom is difficult to find, but the rewards are well worth the effort.
24. We must see the whole picture in order to properly understand the individual parts.
25. If we do not pass on the wisdom of God to our children, we are contributing to a culture of folly. This is especially true about the responsibility of fathers.
26. Children are encouraged to actively rebel against their parents, turning God’s creational ordinances on their head.
27. Perfectly-applied wisdom is seen in the life of Jesus Christ, in whom all things hold together – Christ is our creator and our savior.
28. The same wisdom that made the worlds and holds them together is the wisdom that we receive in Christ.
29. We can expect that this wisdom is relevant to our calling and vocation. Remember God’s analogy of creating the cosmos and building a house; God is the one who gives wisdom for the task (cf. Ex. 31:1-11).
30. The eschatological dimension of wisdom rejects any artificial separation of nature and grace. Wisdom is a “tree of life” (Prov. 3:18), evoking images of creation and new creation (Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:2).
31. The new creation is not another creation, but the renewing of God’s good creation.

32. It is *this* creation that is going to be delivered by God. You are not going to be delivered *out of* creation.

Application Questions

1. The level of wisdom required to build an ancient cathedral or tabernacle is quantitatively higher than the wisdom required to build many of the modern church buildings. What does this suggest about our priorities and our wisdom?
2. In what areas have we acted as if we know better than the wisdom of God?
3. How is a matriarchal society a bad situation for women, men, and children? What does this have to do with the journey into wisdom?
4. How can we apply God's wisdom in our everyday vocation?
5. How does the eschatology of a renewed creation influence our everyday life?