

Proverbs Ch8v1-36 - God's Wisdom in Creation

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Preacher: Sam Ross

[0 : 00] Good morning, everybody.

If you could turn to Proverbs chapter 8.! That would be excellent. Thank you for leading this morning, Alex. Last week, we covered Proverbs chapter 7.

If you weren't here, just a quick recap on that chapter. There we heard the seductive lying words of the adulteress. And she seduces fools to come and drink their fill of her illicit pleasures.

But little do they know that her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death. Those are the last words in Proverbs chapter 7.

And we learned how this physical adultery is a picture God uses to show us of our spiritual adultery. How we have scandalously betrayed him and his love.

[1 : 23] But today, we're looking at Proverbs chapter 8. And in this chapter, wisdom breaks onto the scene. And she calls us to herself.

If Proverbs 7 is a massive warning to King Solomon's son, saying, Don't fall for the lies of adultery. Then Proverbs 8 is a magnificent invitation to love and embrace wisdom instead of folly.

So in this chapter, Solomon gives wisdom a voice. And she, wisdom, calls out to us all. And we are meant to hear the stark contrast between the magnificence of wisdom's call, in chapter 8, and the drivel of the adulteress, from chapter 7.

So, before we read, we're actually going to pray. We're going to ask for God's help to really hear what he has to say to us today. Lord, we do not want to be asleep to your word as it is read to us now.

We want to be spiritually alive to your beauty. Hungry for your wisdom. We want to be longing for your glory, satisfied in you alone.

[2 : 55] So help us now to listen. Amen. Kirsty's actually going to read chapter 8 for us. Thank you, Kirsty. Thanks, Sam.

So, chapter 8. Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? At the highest point along the way where the paths meet, she takes her stand.

Beside the gate leading into the city, at the entrance she cries aloud, to you, O people, I call out. I raise my voice to all humanity.

You who are simple, gain prudence. You who are foolish, set your hearts on it. Listen, for I have trustworthy things to say.

I open my lips to speak what is right. My mouth speaks what is true. For my lips detest wickedness. All the words of my mouth are just.

[4 : 03] None of them is crooked or perverse. To the discerning, all of them are right. They are upright to those who have found knowledge. Choose my instruction instead of silver.

Knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is more precious than rubies. And nothing you desire can compare with her.

I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence. I possess knowledge and discretion. To fear the Lord is to hate evil.

I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. Counsel and sound judgment are mine. I have insight.

I have power. By me, kings reign. And rulers issue decrees that are just. By me, princes govern. And nobles, all who rule on earth.

[5 : 06] I love those who love me. And those who seek me find me. With me are riches and honor. Enduring wealth and prosperity.

My fruit is better than fine gold. What I yield surpasses choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness. I walk in the way of righteousness. Along the paths of justice.

Bestowing a rich inheritance on those who love me. And making their treasuries full. The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works. Before his deeds of old. I was formed long ages ago. At the very beginning when the world came to be. When there were no watery depths. I was given birth. When there were no springs overflowing with water. Before the mountains were settled in place. Before the hills. I was given birth. Before he made the world or its fields. [6 : 05] Or any of the dust of the earth. I was there when he set the heavens in place. When he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep. When he established the clouds above. And fixed securely the fountains of the deep. When he gave the sea its boundary. So that the waters would not overstep his command. And when he marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was constantly at his side. I was filled with delight day after day. Rejoicing always in his presence. Rejoicing in his whole world. And delighting in the human race. Now then my children. Listen to me. Blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction and be wise. Do not disregard it. Blessed are those who listen to me. Watching daily at my doors. [7 : 06] Waiting at my doorway. For those who find me. Find life. And receive favor from the Lord. But those who fail to find me.

Harm themselves. All who hate me. Love death. Thank you Christy. Thank you Christy. Okay. I wonder could you see some of the contrast there. Between chapter 7 and 8. Here's a quick summary for you. The adulteress. Chapter 7. She moves secretly. Like a predator. And she speaks lies. Wisdom. On the other hand. She moves publicly. And speaks only what is true. Okay. The adulteress. She leads her victims. Down into slavery. And death. Wisdom. Gifts her lovers with leadership. [8 : 10] Prosperity. And life. The adulteress. She works within the dim perspective. Of her four bedroom walls. Wisdom soars in the heavens.

Above space and time. Solomon asks his son. And God asks us. Which will you choose? Who will you choose? Now because we don't have much time. We're going to focus in on verses 22 to 36. Of this stunning speech. And this is the part of the speech. Where wisdom speaks about her pre-existence. Before time. Okay. And her role in the creation of the world. And here's the first thing that we learn. Wisdom teaches us. How life works best. In God's good creation. Wisdom is the inner logic. Behind everything that God made. [9 : 16] Wisdom is the secret code. Of the universe. It's the key to unlocking. Why everything is. The way it is.

Have a look at verse 22. The Lord brought me forth. As the first of his works. Before his deeds of old. I was formed long ages ago. At the very beginning. When the world came to be. When there were no watery depths. I was given birth. When there were no springs. Overflowing with water. Before the mountains were settled in place. Before the hills. I was given birth. Before he made the world. Or its fields. Or any of the dust. Or any of the dust of the earth. Here's the point. Wisdom. Is from God. So. It is perfect. And trustworthy. In everything. And secondly. Wisdom was here. Long before us. [10 : 14] Before anything. Was created. Wisdom was there. Wisdom says. I've seen it all from the start. So I can tell you.

How. This universe. Works best. Now. What year. Were you born in? I'm not going to put people on the spot. That would be inappropriate. Just think about. The year you were born though. And compare it to this. My great aunt. Was born in the year. 1928. That's pretty impressive. She's still alive by the way. How many of you here are 17? Asia. Okay. Well guess what. When my aunt was 17. World War II had just ended. So there you go. My aunt. Has seen things. Right. On Tuesday. I sat down beside her. On her sofa.

[11:14] And I said. Well. Auntie Dora. How are you getting on? And she looked at me. And said. I want to digitalize. My recipe collection. On my iPhone. Notes app.

She had been lining me up. All day. For a tech. Tutorial. Now. That's the same person. Who lived the first quarter.

Of her life. Without electricity. In her home. Auntie Dorothy understands. How this world works. More than a lot of people. I know. Definitely more than I do. Because. She's observed it. For the most part. Of 97 years. Now.

I want you to compare that. With wisdom. In this speech. Wisdom. Has been there. In every. Age. Of this world.

[12:11] She has observed. The whole. Of history. She knows. How it works best. Right? And even better. She wants to share.

That wisdom. With us. Are we going to listen? Are we. Going to listen? Look at verse 27. Wisdom continues. I was there.

When God. Set the heavens in place. When he marked out the horizon. On the face of the deep. When he established. The clouds above. And fixed. Securely. The fountains of the deep.

When he gave the sea. Its boundary. So the waters. Would not overstep. His command. And when he marked out. The foundations. Of the earth. Then. I was constantly. At his side.

Here's another thing. We learn. God. Wired wisdom. Into the fabric. Of the universe. He used. Wisdom.

[13:10] To set all those. Boundaries. That we just read about. The boundaries of each. Element. Of his creation. For instance. The exact distance. Planet earth.

Needed to be from the sun. So we could all live. Or the eight kilometer. High. Atmosphere. Around earth. Containing. Enough oxygen.

So all living things. Could thrive. Or. How about the precise. Orbit. Of the moon. Around earth. Which maintains. Stable. Seasons.

And enables all the ecosystems. Of the world. To flourish. Okay. Everything. Was perfectly. Marked out. And measured. By God. Through.

Wisdom. Without it. This universe. Would be chaotic. And uninhabitable. So wisdom. Is how everything. Was created. And how everything.

[14:08] Still. Works. And the stunning. Truth. Of this speech. Is that she. Reveals herself. To any. Who would love. And embrace.

Her. Ray Ortlund. Says it. This way. Biblical wisdom. Is more than handy tips. Wisdom. Is the secret code. To reality. And in the bible.

Wisdom. Is speaking to us. So that it isn't. A secret. Any more. So here's the application. The first. Sign of foolishness.

In my life. And in yours. Is when we say. I know what I'm doing. I don't need. Insight.

Or advice. Or counsel. I don't. I don't need wisdom. Well what do we really know? Our understanding.

[15:05] Of this universe. And how it works. Is like a drop. In the ocean. And wisdom says. I am the ocean. I've seen it all. I know it all.

Well. Proverbs 12.15. Says this. Fools. Think their own way. Is right. But the wise. Listen.

To others. The point of this passage. Is this. Wisdom. Is external. To us. That's why she calls out. For us. To take hold of her. And the sooner. That you and I.

Understand. Our wisdom. Deficit. The better. Then we can begin. To daily reach out. For the wisdom. We desperately need.

Without which. Our lives. Will unravel. Into chaos. And I know. I can recall. And you probably can too. Those moments. In your lives. When we've all made.

[16:01] Foolish decisions. And chaos. Has ensued. We don't have to live like that. We can. We can access. This wisdom. From God. So. Here's.

The question. Do you cry out to God. For wisdom. To know how to. Love and discipline. Your children. How to react.

To that. Family member. That maybe you just. Find it difficult. To relate to. How to navigate. That really complex. Work situation. Which there seems.

No right answer. How to begin. That insurmountable. Project. How to make that. Financial decision.

It's going to have lasting. Impacts. On your life. We don't understand. This world correctly. We don't get.

[16:56] What's going on. On the other hand. Wisdom has seen. This universe. From the start. And she offers us. Herself. We.

Need. Wisdom. That is. The first point. Here's the second. Wisdom teaches us. To rejoice. In God's. Good. Creation. So after telling us. About her role. In creation. Wisdom continues. Look at verse. 30. She says. Then I was constantly. At God's side.

I was filled. With delight. Day after day. Rejoicing. Always. In his presence. Rejoicing. In his whole world. And delighting. In mankind. Wisdom.

Sees. God's creation. As. Good. And so. Should we. God created.

[17:53] This world. Good. But we. Live in a fast. Paced. World. And we're often. Too busy. To see it. So here's.

What we need to do. Wisdom tells us. To slow down. And enjoy. God's. World. God created.

This exquisite. Universe. Through wisdom. Have you. Slowed down. To look. At the stars. Lately. I mean. God could easily. Have stopped. After he made.

The eight planets. In our solar system. He chose. To place it. Though. Within this. Super sized. Galaxy. Of a hundred. Billion.

Planets. Now. Why did he do that? Probably. So we could. Enjoy. The stars. At night. And that we could.

[18:47] Marvel. At how great. And glorious. He is. And that he is. Bigger than. All of our. Problems. Put together. No wonder. Wisdom. Rejoices.

Over God's. Universe. We need to. Slow down. And enjoy it too. And. Not just looking up. Look around. I mean. We live. In a beautiful. Part of the world.

Don't we? And this weekend. It's like. Costa del Cork. Now. I'll be honest. With you. Yesterday. It was too hot. We just could not. Face the beach.

So we were looking. For a kind of. A shady. Kind of place. To hang out. Outside. And we ended up. In Tracton Woods. I don't know. If you've. Been there before. There's this beautiful. Rocky.

Riverbed. Shaded by the cover. Of these towering. Trees. With this clear stream. Running through it. And we walked up the river. In our sandals. And it was simply.

[19:42] Beautiful. And it was a small things. Right. It was a shafts. Of light. Just streaming. Through the trees. Onto the forest floor. There was a green ferns.

Growing out. Over the river bank. There's the cold. Crisp. Water. Flowing over our feet. And I was like. You know. This week. I've been running around.

A hundred miles per hour. And missing out. On God's. Kindness. And love. In the simple wonders. Of his creation. We just miss out. When we fail to notice. The small. Things.

Aren't we so much more alive. To God. When we stop to notice. The taste of your food. The roar of the ocean. The scent of the flowers.

[20:38] You know what. It's all for our enjoyment. So let's get out there. Let's rejoice in it. Here's another thing. Wisdom teaches us. To slow down. And enjoy people.

Right. Not only does. Wisdom rejoice over God's world. In verse 31. She rejoices over humanity. People. Made in the image. Of. God. Now.

Anything. Good. That we see. In each other. In anyone else. That's actually. A reflection. Of our creator. But.

Often times. In our world. We can only see. What's wrong. In each other. Right. The sin. The difference. The disability.

Wisdom says. We don't have to focus on that. We can have. Open arms. To everyone. Regardless. [21:39] Of their lifestyle. Or beliefs. Or background. As Christians. We can slow down. And truly see. The glory of God.

In people. Now. Of course. We have a very. Very important. Message. To share. About Jesus. And how he can. Redeem. But we can also.

Enjoy. And appreciate. God's. Common grace. In everyone. In this planet. Regardless. Regardless. Of whether they know him. Or not. They are made. In his image.

And in some way. Reflect. His character. That means. We can heartily laugh. At our neighbors. Jokes. We can revel. In the music. Of our favorite.

Musician. You can experience. The compassion. And kindness. Of your doctor. Or your nurse. And you could be thankful. You can enjoy. The smile.

[22 : 37] Of the person. Walking past you. In the park. And you can say. Thank you. God. You can enjoy. All of these things. So.

The question is. In what ways. Do we need to slow down. And enjoy. God's creation. And also. People. Made.

In God's image. Here's another quote. I found helpful. Only. The biblical. World view. Gushes. With enthusiasm. Over this world.

We live in. And our own. Humanness. It frees us. To enthuse. Wisdom. Says. We can slow down. And enjoy the world.

Just. As she does. But. There's an. Important point. We need to raise here. What about.

[23 : 33] The brokenness. We can't. Pretend like it doesn't exist. And not feel anything about it. Can we? I mean. What do we do with the flash floods.

In Texas. Sweeping through. Kids. Holiday camps. In the night. What do we do with forest fires. In LA. Burning down. 16,000 homes. 20 years on.

What do we do with the tsunami. In Southeast Asia. That killed 200,000 people. This is a beautiful but.

Broken. Creation. Is it not? What do we do with the hurt. And pain that we cause each other. What do we do with a mock.

[24 : 33] Migrant boat. Sitting on top of a. Bonfire in Tyrone. This week. Or the endless bombs. Flying over Ukraine. And Gaza.

Gaza. We are a beautiful. But broken. Humanity. Are we not? Capable.

Of real. Evil. It's fine. And well. Wisdom telling us. To rejoice. Over the world. And humanity. But what about. The brokenness. How could we possibly.

Rejoice. Over that. Here's our options. A. We could look at the brokenness. And say. Well.

God's wisdom. Has obviously come up short. If he's all knowing. And all understanding. Then why. The pain. And suffering. His wisdom is lacking. Or.

[25 : 29] B. You could look at the brokenness. And say. Oh. God's wisdom. Has nothing to do with that. Okay. He just set up the world. But he's hands off now. He has no control. Over what is happening.

In our world. Well. What we read in the Bible. Supports neither of those options. To find out what it does say.

We need to look to Jesus. Paul says. In 1 Corinthians. Chapter 2. I resolved.

To know nothing. While I was with you. Except. Jesus Christ. And him. Crucified. We declare.

God's. Wisdom. A mystery. That has been. Hidden. And that God. Destined for our glory. Before time. Began.

[26 : 25] There's something about. Jesus. Death. And resurrection. That epitomizes. God's. Wisdom. If you asked.

The apostle Paul. To give you the very best example. Of God's wisdom. Where would he point you to? He'd point you to the cross of Christ. Because in the most broken.

Twisted event in history. The righteous. The righteous. Maker. Of the universe. Was falsely tried. Beaten to within an inch of his life.

And suffocated to death. On a Roman cross. If ever there was brokenness. If ever there was injustice.

If ever there was. Insidious evil. It was right. There. At Calvary. And as they laid. Jesus lifeless body.

[27 : 27] In the tomb. Look for all the world. Like God's wisdom. Had come. Up. Short. They scoffed. At Jesus.

As an abject. Fool. If God. Was all knowing. And understanding. Then why. Allow that pain. And suffering. On his son. But we know the story.

Don't we? Three days later. Jesus. Walked. Out of that grave. Victorious. Over sin. And death.

Forever. And all of a sudden. It became clear. God. Had planned. His son's. Brokenness.

Brokenness. From before. Time. To display.

His unparalleled. Mercy. On foolish. Sinners like us. God. Had designed. Jesus. Brokenness.

[28 : 23] As a means. To bring. Salvation. To us. God. Had ordained. Christ's. Brokenness. To heal us.

To redeem us. From eternal death. Paul says again. Chapter later. He says. It is because. Of God. That you are in. Christ Jesus. Who has become for us. Wisdom from God. That is.

Our righteousness. Holiness. And redemption. Did you hear that last word? Redemption. Redemption means.

Being bought back. Being rescued. Christ. Our wisdom. Has become. Our redemption. That is what the text is saying. So for anyone who trusts.

[29 : 18] In Christ. He has redeemed us. From the curse. Of sin and death. And made us. Right. Before God. Holy. Before him. We are broken people.

Redeemed. To an eternity. Of perfect glory. Which we never deserved. It is astonishing. It's breathtaking. It's God's perfect.

Wisdom. And if God. In his wisdom. Would ordain such. Brokenness.

To fulfill. His glorious plan. Of salvation. Why would we think. That all the other brokenness. We see. In our world. Is without purpose. Why would we think.

That he is unable. To do anything. About that brokenness. Like it's just out of his control. Why would we think. That he doesn't have a plan. To redeem that too. Instead of option A.

[30 : 23] Where we look at the brokenness. And say. Well. God's wisdom. Must have fallen short. Or option B. Where we suppose. God has just nothing to do. With all the brokenness. Here's what the gospel tells us.

God planned. The brokenness. To demonstrate. His mercy. And grace. To his people. To redeem all things. To himself.

And display. His perfect wisdom. And that changes. How we look at the brokenness. In our world. Today. Doesn't it? Because we.

Have hope. Now. Here's another quote. Which I found helpful. Because of God. Everything in creation. Is good. Because of Adam. Everything God made.

Is marred. And tragic. Because of Christ. Everything God made. Will be. Redeemed. Now.

[31 : 23] What does it mean. That Christ. Will redeem. The whole creation. What's that about? Covered how God. Will redeem us. How about the whole creation. If you could turn with me.

Please. To Romans. Chapter 8. That's on page. 1,135.

Romans. Chapter 8. Verse 19. And the writer Paul. Knew very well.

The brokenness of this world. And all the suffering. That came with it. But he had his eyes fixed. On. A coming. Redemption. In Christ. So we're going to start. Verse 19.

Romans. Chapter 8. For the creation. Waits. In eager. Expectation. For the children. Of God. To be revealed. For the creation.

[32 : 23] Was subjected. To frustration. Not by its own choice. But by the will. Of the one. Who subjected it. In hope.

That the creation. Itself. Will be liberated. From its bondage. To decay. And brought. Into the freedom. And glory. Of the children. Of God. We know.

That the whole creation. Has been groaning. As in the pains. Of childbirth. Right up. To the present. Time. Can you see that?

First and foremost. God's children. Will be redeemed. Okay. As children of God. We've been redeemed. From sin. Forgiven. Restored. To right.

Relationship. With God. And yet. We still experience. Our brokenness. In the here and now. Don't we? And we long. For our ultimate.

[33 : 18] Redemption. To be presented. One day in heaven. As God's children. In new. Resurrected bodies. That will no longer. Struggle.

With sin. We are redeemed now. And yet. There's an even fuller. Redemption. To come. That's for us. But also. God's creation. Will be redeemed. The physical universe.

Also. Groans. Waiting for a different. Sort of redemption. To be made new. There won't be. Any more. Forest fires.

Or flash floods. Or earthquakes. There won't be. Any more heat stroke. Or frostbite. God is making. Everything.

New again. Through Christ. And new heavens. And earth. Never to be broken. By the fall. Can you even imagine. How glorious.

[34 : 13] That will be. God has a plan. To redeem. All. Of creation. And all. Who trust.

In Christ. Will be redeemed. To. And live there. With him. Forever. That's. God's. Wisdom. And he offers it.

To all of us. In Christ. As we finish. Can we go back. To Proverbs. Chapter 8. And just. Read. The last. Couple of verses. Once more. Page.

642. And as we. Listen. To wisdom.

Speech. We know. That Christ. Is. The fulfillment. Of wisdom. Appeal. To us. Because. He is. God. The son. Through whom.

[35 : 11] And for whom. Everything. Was made. And he. Calls us. To listen. To him. So let's read. From verse 32. Now.

Then. My children. Listen. To me. Blessed. Are those. Who keep. My. Ways. Listen.

To my instruction. And be wise. Do not. Disregard it. Blessed. Are those. Who listen. To me.

Watching. Daily.

At my doors. Waiting. At my doorway. For those. Who find me. Find. Life. And receive. Favor. From the Lord.

But those. Who fail. To find me. Harm. Themselves. All. Who hate. Me. Love. Death.

[36 : 06] You know. Christ. Teaches us. How life. Works best. And those. Words. We just. He. He. Implores.

Us. To find. In him. The key. To overflowing. Life. By keeping. His ways. Right. To bring. Before him.

The complex. Situations. In our lives. And find. Wisdom. By listening. To him. I love that. Vivid. Metaphor. In verse. Thirty four. Of.

Daily. Waiting. And watching. At his. Doorway. Does that. Describe. How you. And I. Relate to Jesus. On a day to day basis.

Watching. And waiting. At his doorway. For what he has to say. Maybe. This is the first day. That you. Would find Christ. To be your.

[37 : 01] Wisdom. Maybe this is the first day. You would know. God's incredible. Favor. His forgiveness. Poured out. On your life. Finding Jesus.

Means. Trusting him. To redeem you. From your sin. And its consequences. And turning. To walk. To walk. In his way. The way. Of wisdom. And once we've done that. Christ. Teaches us. That we can truly. Rejoice. In all of God's creation.

We can slow down. And enjoy. His world. And people. Made in his image. Knowing. He. Will redeem. Everything.

That is broken. Don't look at the brokenness. Anymore. And say. Where is God's wisdom now? Look at the brokenness. In your life. And in this world. With overflowing hope. That Christ.

[38 : 00] Will redeem. All God's creation. To a beautiful. Remarkable. Future. And if you are in Christ. Rejoice today.

That you will surely. Share. In the future. With him. Your inheritance. In that new creation. Is sure. It's sealed. In Christ.

Everything sad. Will. Come. Untrue. But we can't afford. To miss the warning. In verse 36. Those who fail.

To find me. Harm themselves. All who hate me. Love death. Don't follow. The empty promises. Of folly. Of spiritual adultery. Follow Christ. As your wisdom. As the key to everything.

[38 : 57] Let's pray. Just take a moment.

To confess. In your own. Heart. What God. Has challenged you about. In his word today. Maybe. You want to talk to him about.

Your attitude. Towards his wisdom. In the past. Maybe. How you have. Seen yourself right.

In your own eyes. And failed. To look to him. For his wisdom. Lord.

We confess. We don't really understand. What's going on. In this universe. In this universe. Our knowledge. Is so. Utterly limited. And yet.

[40 : 22] We. Foolishly. Think. We know it all. And we think. We can go. Without. Your wisdom. We repent. Of that. Lord. Lord.

We also repent. We also repent. Of. Not. Seeing. Your wisdom. In creation. In the world around us. In people. Made in your image. Help us. Lord. To slow down. And see. Your glory. And your wisdom. The inner logic.

Of everything. Lord. Help us. To reach out. For your wisdom. Moment. By moment. To cry out. For it. Because you have said. That if we. Seek. You. Jesus. We will find you. Help us to come before you.

[41 : 21] Humbly. Every day. Receiving from you. Everything we need. To live life well. In your world. Looking forward.

To that day. When you will redeem. All the brokenness. Both. In our lives. And also in the world. Around us. We rejoice. That day is coming.

Until that day. Keep us. In your love. Help us to walk. On the way of wisdom. We pray these things. For your glory. And for our good. Amen. We're going to finish with. I think an appropriate song. All creatures of our God and King. Talks about all the redeemed. Washed by his blood.

[42 : 16] Come and rejoice. In his great love. That's who we are. And then also in the last verse. He points us forward to that day in heaven. When all creation will be redeemed.

So let's sing this out.