

Wisdom in Creation

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 11 June 2017

Preacher: Matt Coburn

[0 : 00] Amen. Good morning.

Let me make my annual summer announcement. It's warm today. It will get warmer before the end of the... If you need to get up, move to the back, find a fan, get a drink of water to keep you awake and to allow you to continue to listen, please feel free to do so.

If you are suffering, I know it is cooler downstairs, so if you need to move downstairs, there are speakers as well down there. So, this is but a foretaste of our summer, friends, but the Lord is with us.

So, let me pray for us before we look into God's Word this morning. Please pray with me. Lord, we come to you this morning and we acknowledge how much we need you.

Lord, even as we have sung of your goodness, sung of the remarkable mercy you have shown us in Christ, Lord, we are reminded of how often we lose sight of that in our daily lives.

[1 : 37] And Lord, as we come to your Word this morning, we pray that by your Word you would remind us of the kind of God you are, Lord, and that you would help us, Lord, that in our hearts and in our minds, in our words and in our actions, Lord, that we would respond to all that you have done.

Lord, with faith. God, I ask this morning for your help as I speak. And Lord, I pray that even though it is warm, Lord, you will help us by your Spirit to listen to your Word.

Lord, to allow your Word to do the work that you want to do in us this morning. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So, I'm not much of a handyman.

I have tools. I don't always know how to use them well. But the other week, my son got into his eight-year-old creative mind, a thought that he wanted to make a spaceship out of wood.

And we have scrap wood in our garage, as maybe some of you do. And so, we pulled out the scrap wood, and I said, okay, here's what you do. You design it. I'll cut it. You build it. We have glue.

[2 : 49] We have nails. That's about as far as we go. But he loves it. And so, he drew some designs on a couple of pieces of scrap plywood and said, dad, can you cut this?

And so, I make the first cut, and that was pretty easy. And then the second one, gosh, I just couldn't get it right. The blade just kept binding. And I thought, what is going on here?

And then I looked more carefully, and I realized, well, this plywood has a grain. And I am cutting against the grain of the plywood, and it makes it a whole lot harder to do what I want to do.

Friends, as we continue our series in Proverbs this morning, and as we talk about biblical wisdom, what we're going to look at this morning is a bit of an understanding of how wisdom could be defined as living according to the grain of God, his character, and how he has made the world.

We don't always do this very well. If you stop and think about it, our lives are full of frustrations, difficulties, challenges. All of this, like my saw trying to cut on the angle against the grain of the wood.

[4 : 07] Our lives feel like that sometimes. C.S. Lewis writes, searchingly, I think, about how we think about this.

He's writing, he uses the word morality, but I think that wisdom could be imported to have the same meaning in this passage. I want to read this so that you can think about how you respond to the idea that wisdom is living according to the grain of how God has made the world.

Lewis writes this, there's a story about a schoolboy who was asked what he thought God was like. He replied that as far as he could make out, God was the sort of person who's always snooping around to see if anyone was enjoying himself and then trying to stop it.

Now, I'm afraid that this sort of idea in the world, I'm afraid that this is the sort of idea that the world morality raises in a good many people's minds.

Something that interferes, something that stops you from having a good time. Lewis then says this, in reality, moral rules are directions for running the human machine.

[5 : 16] Every moral rule is there to prevent a breakdown or strain or friction in the running of that machine. That is why the rules at first seem to be constantly interfering with our natural inclination.

When you are being taught to use any machine, the instructor keeps on saying, no, no, don't do it like that. Because, of course, there are all sorts of things that may look right, look all right, and seem to you the natural way of treating the machine, but do not really work.

And friends, as we come to this question of wisdom and how we relate to it, I think this is the problem that we have. And that is that though maybe we would say we want God's wisdom, when push comes to shove, we think we know better, often, how the machine ought to work.

We often believe that we have an idea of how we ought to live, and we don't understand and don't respond to God properly in the midst of it.

Think about the storyline of the Bible for a minute. Is this not the very root of the very beginning of the fall in Genesis 3? God, having created a great world, gave Adam and Eve instructions, this is how you are to live, walk in it.

[6 : 38] I give you a few instructions on how this world is meant to live for your good. But when the tempter came, he said, did God really say?

And underneath it, he was saying, is God's rules really good? Maybe there's another way. Rather than submitting to God and receiving from him wisdom, maybe you can go out on your own.

Maybe you can be like God, knowing good and evil on your own, apart from him. Sometimes our resistance to wisdom is willful.

I don't want to do it that way. I want to do it my way. That's what my child thinks when he picks up a knife and says, Daddy, let me cut the vegetables.

No, you don't know how to do it yet. You will hurt yourself. No, Daddy, I want to do it my way.

Daddy, can I use the circular saw? No, you don't know how to use it yet.

[7 : 41] Sometimes it's lack of understanding. We don't know how to live. Maybe those of you who are parents feel like this. What does wisdom look like? Maybe you're in a dating relationship.

What does wisdom look like? But in the midst of it, it's easy for our hearts to not turn from God, but away to ourselves, to the world, to many other sources of wisdom.

Our passage this morning, as we continue in Proverbs, we have yet another call, yet another summons to embrace wisdom to embrace wisdom and to see it as good and right.

But here in this passage, we see a bit more of an explanation as well as to why. Why is wisdom worth pursuing? So we're going to look at that this morning. If you want to turn with me in your pew Bibles to Proverbs chapter 8.

It's page 532 in your pew Bibles. Proverbs chapter 8. Most of this chapter is an apology.

[8 : 55] We'll see verse 6 all the way through verse 31 is the reasons why with the beginning and the end, setting our scene, and then giving a final call to respond.

So that's... We're going to look at it along this way. So read with me, if you will, Proverbs chapter 8. We're going to read it in sections and look at them in sections.

So Proverbs chapter 8, verses 1 through 5. 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 cry is to the children of man.

O simple ones, learn prudence. O fools, learn sense. In the introduction, the writer here sets up wisdom as a personified... A town crier, if you will.

[10 : 00] And one of the things that's striking here is that she is going to particular places where she is going to be most heard. She is in the public square where she is going to have the greatest opportunity to interact with those in the city.

If you see it, look again. On the heights beside the way, think of a pathway through Israel where she's standing up on a higher place so that when she speaks, the whole area around will be able to hear her.

Or she goes to the crossroads where multiple people will meet her along the way. Or she goes to the gates of the town, which is where, if you know, the elders, the wise of the town would tend to sit. And also it would be the funnel whereby everyone coming in and out of the town would have to walk. So wisdom is calling out to say, I have a platform in the public square and I'm crying to you.

My appeal is to all of you. And the appeal is also, interestingly, aimed at a particular kind of people. [11:11] If you look at verses 4 and 5. First of all, I want to say this is not a gender-specific call. Wisdom is not for men and not for women in the Bible.

Wisdom is for all people. The writer here is using gender as a relational literary form to explain this interaction.

But we need to make sure that we don't misunderstand it and think, oh wait, is God saying wisdom is more for men than wisdom? No, of course not. Wisdom is for all of his people. Secondly, look at verse 5.

He says, I speak particularly to those who are simple and to the fools. And interestingly, these words don't tend to... There's a whole range of these kinds of words in Proverbs.

And some of them on one end are those who are heart-resistant to God. Those tend to be described as the scoffers or the mockers. And at times, fool is also used in that category.

[12:18] But here, the connotation, and particularly when you combine it with simple, the simple-minded, is that it's not those who don't want God's wisdom, but it's those who don't have God's wisdom but who need it.

So there are people who are inexperienced in life. Often it's viewed perhaps as a young man, the children. So those who are inexperienced, those who are naive.

And when we stop and think about it, isn't that actually all of us? Aren't we all inexperienced in the ways of God? Aren't we all naive about the riches and the depth of the wisdom of God?

But the call is to those who know that they need it. The call is to those who are aware of their lack. And so in humility and weakness, have an opportunity to hear the words of wisdom.

This is the call that wisdom puts out for us. And it says, embrace it. Embrace what I have to say to you. This is the setup then for the main part of the passage where we see two things.

[13:33] Two things that wisdom gives us that commends wisdom to us. Why wisdom is good. First, in verses 6 through 21, we see that wisdom shapes the form of a good life before God.

Let's read this together and think about what it says about that. Starting in verse 6. Here, 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's nothing twisted or crooked in them. They're 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 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.

[14:40] 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 in the path of justice, granting an inheritance to those who love me and filling their treasuries.

Wisdom personifies herself here and talks about the goodness of wisdom and how it reflects the character of God.

So, in verses 6 through 9, look with me. You see that there's a commitment to and a reflection of wisdom being rooted in truth and the truthfulness of God.

[15:56] Wisdom is straight, not crooked. It's made up of words that are not perverted or lead to evil, but words that are righteous.

There is a sense in which wisdom follows a plumb line of God's truth. You know what a plumb line is? A plumb line is something that builders put up in order to tell what vertical is.

Because gravity is the best definer of what is truly up and down in a place. And so, I'm sure some of you scientists are like, well, that's not really true.

But bear with me, right? This is what the biblical idea of what a plumb line is at least, right? A plumb line gives you a straight and a standard measure. And what wisdom is saying here is, what I speak to you is according to this plumb line of God's character of truth.

And then it goes on in verses 12 through 14. I'm going to skip over a couple and I'll bring those back at the end. Verses 12 through 14.

[17:04] It's fascinating. One of the commentators, Tremper Longman, described this section as a bit of a personal introduction. Wisdom is saying, this is who I am. And one of the ways you know who someone is is by who they associate with.

So, look with me in verses 12 through 14. I, wisdom, dwell with prudence. And I find knowledge and discretion. The fear of the Lord is a hatred of evil.

Pride and arrogance in the way of evil and perverted speech. I hate. I have counsel and sound wisdom. I have insight and I have strength. And wisdom then is characterized by some of these facets of things that she dwells with.

What wisdom brings is an ability to navigate life. An ability to be sober-minded. That's the idea of prudence. Discretion is to think carefully and to understand the root of the issue and to be able to respond properly to it.

Counsel and sound wisdom and insight are, again, creating a framework of understanding. And interestingly, in verse 14, it has strength too.

[18:20] Wisdom is not simply a nice idea, but there is a robustness to wisdom that gives this framework, that gives this worldview, that gives this set of principles on how to live, a strength for your life that is beautiful.

And as we'll see later, it's rooted in something even deeper. And you see in verse 13, fundamentally, wisdom hates evil.

There is no realpolitik in wisdom. There is no compromise to the fallenness of the world.

Wisdom navigates a way through and in the fallenness of the world that is right before God. And it fights in every place against evil, against injustice.

And again, we see in these things the character of God for us. Then, interestingly, he goes from a personal to, in verses 15 through 17, he says, and by wisdom, this is actually how society, when society works rightly, this is how society works.

[19:42] And so kings are able to rule, princes are able to rule by me, for me, those who govern justly, and this is the qualifier, those who govern justly do so because they're walking in the paths of wisdom.

Those who do what is right in leadership, those who shape our society in ways that are helpful and productive, are those who walk in the way of wisdom that reflect God's wisdom.

So I think what the psalmist is saying here in verses 15 through 17. And then what you see in verses 18 through 21, he picks up a theme that he had actually mentioned earlier in 6 through 9, that this wisdom is of surpassing value.

Fascinating, verse 11, do you see what it says there? Wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.

Here you see the psalmist laying out that challenge that we talked about at the beginning. You may desire this, but wisdom says this. Will you value wisdom because it comes from God greater than your own desires, than your own thoughts, than your own patterns of understanding?

[21:14] So what do we do with this passage? Oh, no, there's one other thing I wanted to say about that that's important. Look with me at 18 through 21, right? 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 ways of righteousness, in the paths of justice, granting an inheritance to those who love me, filling their treasuries.

Now here's the tricky thing about this, is that it seems like what the proverbial writer here is saying is, when you walk in wisdom, you have something that's better than all the riches of the world, and oh, by the way, it sounds like your coffers are going to be filled as well.

It sounds like you're going to prosper in the way of wisdom. And there are some in our world today who would easily take this and say, so this is a promise for you.

If you walk in wisdom, if you do these things, then you will be successful in your career, have a peaceful and happy family, have a lifelong, easy, and joyful marriage, and have a fat bank account and an easy retirement.

[22:31] Sounds great, doesn't it? Gosh, we'd all like that. But that's not actually what this is saying. First, and what it's saying is, that the riches that we gain from wisdom are greater than the riches and the wealth of this world.

Verse 20 is striking in it. When we take hold of a life that is shaped by the righteousness and the paths of justice before God, there is a goodness there where we live in harmony with our Creator

that is better than the riches of this world.

We have peace with God because of these things. And it is a wonderful and a beautiful thing. But I will also say this. I don't think the psalmist denies that as we walk in the paths of wisdom, things will work better.

Going back to my circular saw, if Eli had been able to draw the pictures along the grain, if we had talked about that ahead of time, it would have been easier to cut the wood.

There are times when, as we walk in wisdom, it is according to the way that we were made to work before God. And we have, in ways, a good life.

[23 : 55] It doesn't mean that we are free from suffering or hardship. Certainly not from persecution or trial. Certainly from our own failure and our own sinfulness.

And even the, we are not promised to be delivered from the effects of the sin of others on our lives. So none of those things are taken away.

And yet, in the midst of all of those things, when we walk in wisdom, there is a goodness to our life that is not just pie in the sky or future, but there is a reality now because it is in harmony with the character and the nature of the God who has given us this wisdom.

The God who is the one who wrote the owner's manual is the one who made us in our relationships in all of these different ways. And so we need to see that this is true.

We need to see that this is, that as we walk in these paths, there is a goodness about life and to take hold of it and to not despise it.

[25 : 08] So God gives us wisdom. He doesn't give us a user's manual that says first do this, then do this, then do this, then do this.

It's not, what's the right word? I kept thinking algorithm, but it's not, it's not stuff. It's not like a recipe. Step by step, if you follow the recipe, you get a beautiful cake, right?

God gives us principles and understanding of him and of his wisdom. And as we, as we ingest that and as we live in it, we begin to understand his ways just a little bit more.

And as we live in them, then we experience the goodness of living in harmony with the way that God has made us to relate to him and to relate to the world.

As C.S. Lewis warned us, we need to recognize that wisdom will be counterintuitive at times. Here's a little example from my own foolish past.

[26 : 09] When I was in college, I was a young believer. I was eager. I was zealous. I had gotten that God wanted us to love one another and to be helpful to one another.

And so I decided that it was going to be good for me to encourage a number of my sisters in Christ by meeting with them for coffee or lunch and listening to them and speaking good words of encouragement.

And you may see where this is going. I was one of those really confusing boys who wasn't very helpful in the whole picture, right? Rather than actually being a blessing to some of these sisters, I was a confusion to them.

And I thought I was doing right. And it wasn't until I had a friend sit me down and say, no, this is not the way to walk.

This is not actually encouraging to your sisters. This is not godly care for them. There's something else in this that is actually foolish in the way that you are treating them.

[27 : 15] And so I had to, to examine my heart. I had to examine my behaviors. I asked for help to think through what were healthy ways to relate to my sisters that would be useful rather than being that really understanding guy who in the end was a little more confusing than helpful.

And so that's one of those places where I learned some wisdom. Hopefully. Learned some wisdom that was counterintuitive to me.

I thought I knew how to do this and I didn't at all. And we need to recognize that that's going to be true. And the challenge for us is are we willing to doubt ourselves and to trust God's wisdom even when it's counterintuitive, even when it doesn't make sense to us?

Are we willing to walk in the ways of wisdom? Now I keep saying that. I know it's all vague right now. But remember, the last two weeks we got practical. Greg and Nick preached on real life issues and gave lots of great examples in areas of wealth and sex and other things about how to live practically.

And for those of you who are dying for that, hold on. We got one more week of the big picture and then we're going to get into the nitty gritty and we're going to talk about all sorts of details. But what

I want is for our hearts to be prepared to hear those words.

[28 : 43] And part of it is by embracing wisdom and not trusting ourselves but being willing to say, okay God, teach me. Teach me your ways of wisdom.

So this first section exposes some of the ways that wisdom reflects the character of God and the nature of God that helps us see how walking in the ways of wisdom are a part of a good life lived before Him.

But then the writer goes even deeper to say, why is this true? In verses 22 through 31, the call of wisdom is worth our attention because wisdom shapes the form of a good creation before God. Let's look at this and read this passage together starting in verse 22. 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.

[29 : 54] 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.

I was daily His delight, rejoicing before Him always, rejoicing in His inhabited world, and delighting in the children of man.

This is a remarkable turn in the argument. He said, wisdom is good because it reflects the character of God. And then he says, wisdom is good because it reflects, because it is integral to the very fabric and fiber of the creation that we live in.

He says two things. He says that wisdom says, I was there before creation happened. And then he says, I was there as creation happened.

So in verses 22 through 26, He's basically saying, I was there beforehand. I was there before God had created order out of chaos. I was there before the life-giving water had sprung up in springs.

[31 : 25] I was there before any of these things had happened. Now, if you will indulge me for two minutes, I want to take a bit of, a quick tour into, interestingly, this verse was used back in the early church in the controversy of Arius and his theology because the church has often seen wisdom and the personification of wisdom as pointing to or embodying the person of Christ.

Go back with me to verse, where are we? Verse 8, verse 22. All right? Look, if you have a Bible, look with me because this is important. Verse 22, the Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work.

Now, do you see the footnote? In my Bible, it's a number three. Look down at the bottom. Possible reading. Oh, here we go. Number three. It could mean also fathered.

So, the Lord fathered me at the beginning of his work. And then it says, oh, and in the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint says created.

From the Septuagint then, as Arius was reading this, he said, we'll see. Wisdom was created by God before creation to then participate in creation.

[32 : 51] This sounds a lot like the role that Christ played in creation as you see in John 1 or Hebrews 1 or Colossians 1, 15 through 17.

And so, therefore, they drew this theological line and said, clearly, Christ was a created being. And this was one of the fundamental controversies of the early church was, was Christ truly divine in this way and in what way could he be so?

And this verse was one of the verses that they used to defend the position that Christ himself was created. created. So, we've got a fairly significant question on our hand.

However, I think that we can say, first of all, based on many, many other places in Scripture in the New Testament where Christ is seen to be equated with God, where he claims God, Godhood to himself, we would say that there's a clear witness in the New Testament about his divinity.

But secondly, exegetically, in this passage, it's asking for this verse to bear way too much weight to say that Christ was created for multiple reasons.

[34 : 13] One is, the word here clearly has a range of meaning. And its core meaning is actually to acquire, that God acquired wisdom, which is a very odd thing because in English when we think of acquiring something, it's something external and objectively outside of us that we have to take into

ourselves.

But that doesn't seem to make sense in this context. Instead, some have, and you see here, this translation uses possessed or one of the other is to say he fathered him.

wisdom. The old-fashioned word for that is to beget someone, which is not to create out of nothing but to out of yourself issue something that is like you.

And it seems much easier to read this passage as saying wisdom here is a personification, an expression of a characteristic of God himself.

Right? Wisdom is not external to God. The wisdom is God's wisdom. And here it has been personified in a literary form so that we can think through the value of God's wisdom and the role of God's wisdom.

[35 : 33] What are we saying for all this? Wisdom is not Christ. In Christ all the riches of the fullness of the wisdom and knowledge of God is fulfilled and expressed.

But wisdom is not Christ per se. Wisdom is pointing us to Christ is how we need to read this. And then here we need to say that wisdom is an expression in a literary form of God's work in creation that when he created the world he did it well.

He did it according to all of his character. And as we see here as we see then he goes on to the second section he not only does that but his wisdom as it shapes the world right?

The Proverbs here is reminding us that what God did when he created the world was to bring order out of chaos. Right? Look with me at verses 27 through 31.

Right? He separated out sky and earth. He created he separated out earth and water dry land.

[36 : 52] And much of this is in the context of an ancient Near East understanding that water and chaos were formed water was a symbol for chaos and discord and evil.

And what God is doing is God is saying no these things do not rule my creation I am going to impose my order on it in a good way. And wisdom is the very fabric and the very weave of how I do that.

Wisdom was there wisdom was there when he separated out the heavens and the earth. Wisdom was there when he separated water from earth. Wisdom was there look at in verse 30 like a master workman or a craftsman.

Wisdom was the shape in which God created a world. And think back in Genesis 1 what did God say about the way he made creation? He said it was good and it was good and it was good and it was good and it was good and it was good and it was very good.

There was nothing bad about God's creation in the beginning. There was nothing against the grain in God's original creation.

[38 : 14] And so if this is the very fabric of the world that we've been brought into the very fabric of the world that we've been made should we not then value wisdom to help us understand how to live in it?

This is the question that wisdom brings to us. And then finally in verses 30 and 31 I want you to see that wisdom in creation was not just a dutiful job when it was done he said alright well that's a good job on to the next.

Verse 30 the second half I was daily his delight that God delighted in wisdom in the middle of creation and then the rest of it rejoicing before him always rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.

You see wisdom was full of joy about the creation that God has made. It's goodness pulled out of wisdom this exaltation this celebration of the beauty of the form and the weave and the shape of what God had made and so God was so wisdom was delighting in God delighting in creation and delighting in humanity and saying this is all very good.

Wisdom knows intimately how the world was made. Wisdom knows intimately how the world was made to work before God. So what are we to think of this?

[40 : 01] First of all let's just stop and celebrate the beauty of the form of creation. Some of you who work in labs for many many hours every week know particular pictures and particular forms of what this looked like that I can't even imagine but you see it and you know it.

For the rest of us we just get to walk down the beach at Ham and Asset or climb to the top of Sleeping Giant or you know go to Colorado and actually see mountains and or go to Nepal and really see mountains.

but when we but all of us in our various ways have an opportunity to see the beauty of God's creation and to rejoice in it and to see how how the weave of it the intricate design the even the microscopic workings of it that again I can't even begin to fathom that some of you know far more intimately than I do that all of this reflects the form and the goodness of God's creation for us but secondly we need to recognize that this is why the doctrine of creation is so important because if God had made this world and God has framed it and shaped it with a particular in a particular way for good as a display of his glory and for the goodness of all who live in it and if wisdom then is woven into that fabric such that this is the way creation works then the call of wisdom in scriptures in Proverbs is to walk in accordance with that to walk according to the along the grain to know the weave and to embrace that weave and friends you know we don't like that we live in a world today that loves self-determination we want to be able to choose our career we want to be able to choose where we live we want to be able to choose what we eat there are more deeper things that our culture is vying for do we get to choose our sexuality our gender our race our family we love self-determination we love to want to do it ourselves but wisdom says

I was there in creation and you are a part of this created order and will you abandon your self-creating project will you abandon your own wisdom and will you instead seek to understand how I have been a part of what God has done how wisdom has shaped your creation and your world and your life will you love it will you seek it will you treasure it and friends we know that this is all true partly because as we've mentioned earlier this points us to a greater truth and a greater wisdom for if our life lived before God is a good life our life lived before God within this creation is what we're longing for then the way that we can best get to it is not by trying to be the most wise person in the world although pursuing wisdom is great but it's not about trying to be the most wise person in the world it is about finding and knowing the wisest person in the world when Jesus walked the earth he said

I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the father apart from me he comes to us and he says I am the one who knows because I was there with creation even in creation even more so than wisdom I wasn't just a personification I was a member of the trinity intimately invested in how things were made I was with God doing the creating but not only did he create the world and know all of that but then he entered into it in his incarnation he came and showed us what God could look like what it would look like to walk in the way of wisdom in this world how to live perfectly according to the weave and the grain of that created order and so he came and he lived a sinless life but he didn't just do that then in his purpose plan having lived that life he offers himself for fools like us for those who don't know that we don't live according to the grain for those who have chosen to go away and to do other things for those of us who are lost and don't know or have refused [45 : 17] God's ways which is all of us we've all gone our own way Jesus comes and he offers himself up for us the wisest man in the world dying for fools like us so that the sin might be the penalty of sin might be removed from us but even more than that so that by his resurrection from the dead by his rising to new life by his beginning then this work of recreating the world which he starts in our hearts by giving us a new heart that is now able to respond to the call of wisdom and to walk in it this is what Christ offers us do you seek wisdom Christ is the one who can give it to you but maybe more more accurately take hold of Christ for he is your wisdom he's not just going to give you more instructions from the manual but you will find in relationship with him the wisdom that you need to live life this is what we read in

Colossians in Christ all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge dwell but this is the hope it's Christ in you the hope of glory with Christ in you you are now able for the first time to be free from your patterns of sin that reject God's wisdom you are free for the first time to actually embrace life according to God's plan for you and this is the call for us and this going back to Proverbs is where we end verses 32 through 36 and now 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 for the Lord but he who fails to find me injures himself and all who hate me love death there are two ways to live to embrace or to reject

Greg's going to preach on this next week so I'm not going to develop the theme much but recognize that there is a choice that Proverbs is always putting before us will you today turn to God humble yourself know that you need his wisdom and seek him for it or will you do it on your own will you trust in God to provide for you and care for you and instruct you or will you think that it is up to you

but the invitation is if you follow God what you will find there is life and so we're going to explore what that life looks like as it relates to the words we speak to one another the emotions that we feel our anger and our jealousy and our pity what does life look like in our relationships with our families with our friends how do we deal with wealth and power how do we deal with authority how do we seek guidance and direction for our lives these are all some of the topics that we're going to be exploring this summer but its value will be as we embrace the path of wisdom as we hear this call and respond because wisdom is woven in the very fabric of creation and reflects the very character of God himself so let us walk in it let's pray father we thank you this morning for this word and lord we thank you for the beauty of your creation and your world lord I ask that you would help us this morning to humble our hearts before you lord that we would know how great your wisdom is that we would lord forsake our own foolish self-determinism lord that we would recognize that we were created and to work lord to live a life lord that is to your glory to live a life that is good before you lord we must seek you find in you lord the life that we that we long for and that you made us for thank you for jesus who is the one who gives us life out of death we pray these things in his name amen