

Click on This

13th Sun. after Pentecost – 08/18/24 – Mt. Calvary Luth.
Text: Proverbs 9:1-11 Pastor Keith Besel

v. 5, [Wisdom calls out to all souls,] **“Whoever is simple, let him turn in here! ... Come, eat of My bread and drink of the wine I have mixed.”**

Introduction

✘ “You have been invited!” I remember when it was a big deal to get an invitation. When I was young, it might have been a handmade card from one of my friends to a birthday party. Or later it was to a cousin’s wedding.

→ Back in the day, invitations almost always were delivered by the postal carrier, except for the rare occasions when they were delivered in person. Often these invitations were in nice envelopes, printed on fancy paper, using formal language like “You are cordially invited...” I don’t know about you, but these invitations made me feel like I was very special; like the person extending the invitation considered me to be important to him/her.

→ Back then, when an invitation finished with the abbreviation, RSVP I had no idea what that actually stood for, which is the French: *Répondez, s’il vous plait*, which simply means, “Respond, please.” My Mom taught me to think of it this way, “The fact that you have received this invitation is big honor; something you don’t deserve. So because the person that sent the invitation thinks of you so highly and made the effort to invite you, then you should at least honor them in return by giving him/her a response of some kind ASAP!”

✘ Well, things have changed now days, haven’t they? It’s not uncommon to get 10 invitations every day. They come in the mail: “Because you are a valued customer, you’ve been invited to a special advance opportunity to enjoy special prices on our products that other people won’t get!” They come to your phone: “Because you are a respected member of the community, you are invited to participate in a survey that will put your opinions in front of important people in the government.” They come by text message: “Can you believe it? You are invited to enjoy three nights for free at a top Florida resort if you will just agree to listen to ‘a short 2 hour presentation’ about timeshare vacations.” And yes, they pop right up on your phone and computer screen: “Just click on this!” And then you contemplate, “What should I do? Should I click ... or should I not?”

✘ It’s no surprise then that we’re all pretty skeptical about invitations. Before we do anything, we need to know 1) who it’s from, 2) whether it’s legitimate or not, 3) is it worth our time, 4) what are we going to get out of it, and 5) whether or not there are any hidden costs or expectations.

→ But friends, I have an invitation for you today; one that is printed on the most wonderful paper in the world; right here in the pages of your Bible. And this invitation is so important that God – the Creator of all things; the author of life itself and the Redeemer of every soul on earth, keeps sending it to you and to me again and again; every single day until the day that we take our last breath.

✘ Yes, I know, the constant, unending invitations today – most of which turn out to be scams, makes us skeptical and skittish. But you can have full confidence in this invitation from God today: for He invites us all to come in and receive a 100% free gift! A gift we don’t deserve, but a gift that gives us life because it completely changes our lives. Wisdom – that is God’s Wisdom in the flesh is calling to you, “Come, eat of My bread and drink of the wine that I have mixed” (v.5).

I. Just knowing “Wisdom” doesn’t make you wise.

- ⊗ Oh, I hear your response already. “Nice try Pastor, but I wasn’t born yesterday. As my parents taught me, ‘There’s no such thing as a free lunch.’ So what’s the catch? Because there is always a catch.”
 - ➔ The first question I said earlier that we need to know when we receive any invitation is, “Who is it from?” So, who is this Wisdom? And a few follow up questions, What kind of house is verse one saying that Wisdom has built? And what sort of bread and wine is Wisdom promising to give?
 - ➔ I don’t blame you for wanting to hang back and delay your RSVP until you get answers to these questions; maybe even until you see if someone else has tried it out first. After all, it only takes a quick click now days to read up on all of the reviews, right?
- ⊗ Well, maybe you think you know what or who Wisdom is. Maybe you think that wisdom is like old sayings from those in the past, right? Like “A stitch in time saves nine” or “The early bird gets the worm” or “Waste not, want not.” Yea, that’s it, “Wisdom” is all of those things you agree with and maybe even click that you “like” on your phone with a thumbs up or red heart emoji, but then you really don’t pay much attention to.
- ⊗ But we’re not looking at social media here today or any worldly media like TV or Newspapers or even scientific journals for that matter. We believe and confess that the greatest and only perfect source of truth is God’s holy Word; the Bible, right?
 - ➔ So, in God’s Word, in Proverbs 8:27-31, Wisdom tells us, “When [Yahweh] God 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.”
 - ➔ So, Wisdom was by God’s side when He created the world, and everything God created was created together with Wisdom. Now, who does that sound like? Well, consider John 1:1-3,14: “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 any thing made that was made. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
- ⊗ Does Wisdom sound familiar yet? That’s right, this person with the name “Wisdom” here in the book of Proverbs, is the Second Person in the Triune God. He is Jesus. And before you ask, the reason Proverbs refers to Wisdom with the feminine pronouns “her” and “she” is only because in the Hebrew language every noun has a gender assigned to it and the word “wisdom” just happens to be a feminine noun. So, no, the Bible is not saying that Jesus is lady.
 - ➔ But “Wisdom” – that is Jesus before He was born to the Virgin Mary on Christmas – Wisdom is giving you an invitation.
- ⊗ This means God is giving you an invitation! So, this so much more than just the kind of thing that you hear and agree to but do nothing about; this is not just another nice saying that your parents or your pastor made you memorize in Confirmation Class that you remembered long enough to pass a test and then forgot the next day.
 - ➔ I mean, we’re talking about an invitation from the One who died for your sins on the cross. Sure – Jesus is the Son of God. Absolutely – Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Of course He does. You’ll even publically confess here in just a few minutes, that you believe in “Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God...being of one substance with the

Father by whom all things were made...who was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary...and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate” (Nicene Creed).

- ✘ But Wisdom says something much more than just memorized truths and wise old sayings. Wisdom says, “Don’t just stand out there believing in profound sayings printed on a page. Come in here and eat them! Drink them! Come into My house; that is My church; where I am serving a feast of fine wine and the most excellent bread. Take My truth into your mouth and taste it! Lift up the cup of life and savor it!”
 - ➔ That’s right, come in, out of the world, and actually enjoy...really enjoy all of these things that you profess to believe. “Leave your simple ways” – that is the ways of the world, so that together, as verse six says, we can “walk in the way of insight.”
- ✘ Now that you “know” who Wisdom is and you nod your agreement to Jesus’ invitation does this make you wise? Well, if you memorize all kinds of ancient truths but you never follow them – never put them into practice, are you wise?

II. Jesus invites you to more than book knowledge.

- ✘ No. Jesus invites you to more than that. During His time on earth Jesus spoke many wise sayings, and He told many wise parables. But He did more than that. He also did wise things. And He invites you here and throughout Scripture to do the same. In today’s Gospel Reading Jesus said, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh” (Jn. 6:51).
 - ➔ Those wise words could only be acted on by the gift Jesus was freely offering – the gift of faith. But unfortunately, many of those who had been following Jesus, were unwilling to believe that Jesus was, as Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 1:24, “the power of God and the wisdom of God” and so they left Him; they rejected Him in unbelief (Jn. 6:64).
- ✘ In verse nine, Jesus says, “Give instruction to a wise man, and He will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.” It is my prayer today that both you and I are willing to recognize that we are not perfect; that because we sin, we not only need it, but we actually appreciate Christ’s correction and learning.
 - ➔ So that now we know Jesus does not just offer us a statement of truth. Much more, He offers you to taste, eat and inwardly digest His truth. You see, Jesus doesn’t just invite you to believe in a series of propositions. He invites you to enter His house; to eat the bread that He has prepared and drink the wine that He has mixed. “Leave your simple ways, and live,” Jesus says. He’s got His arms open wide. He wants you joined with Him in an ongoing, life-long; actually eternity-long relationship, starting right now!
 - ➔ He’s already done all the work. All that’s needed is to receive Him in faith. And even that is His gift, already given to you in the waters of your baptism.

Conclusion

- ✘ You are invited! Not to take out a new credit card with the burden of debt; not to lose weight with the empty promise that you’ll look like some super model or body builder; or to sign up for a chance at a free cruise with required hidden charges. Those may even come printed on nice paper; personalized with your name and delivered to your door.
 - ➔ But here (*Bible*) ... here is your invitation from God. Look at it. It’s just a book...without pictures no less. And look at that (*baptismal font*). It’s just a bowl filled with ordinary tap water. And what is this on the Altar (*Communion elements*)? Some bread and wine; not even nice bread. Just flat wafers of flour and water ... and wine that is actually pretty cheap to buy.

✘ But what are these things really? What does Wisdom – Jesus the Son of God, Your Savior say about these things in front of you here? Wisdom says these are His gifts for you; life-giving gifts; life-altering, saving gifts; gifts with which He desires to feed you His almighty power and grant you His victory over sin, death and the devil; gifts that strengthen you for the challenges of this world; that comfort you in times of grief and loneliness; gifts that fill You with His grace and overflow with the peace and the joy that this world cannot understand except by faith.

→ Here, you are invited. *Répondez, s'il vous plait* (Please respond). Amen.