

**WISDOM IN THE STREETS**  
Follow Christ  
Banska Stiavnica, 29th October 2023

**Proverbs 1:20** Wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the markets she raises her voice; <sup>21</sup> at the head of the noisy streets she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates she speaks: <sup>22</sup> "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge? <sup>23</sup> If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you. <sup>24</sup> Because I have called and you refused to listen, have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded, <sup>25</sup> because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof, <sup>26</sup> I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when terror strikes you, <sup>27</sup> when terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you. <sup>28</sup> Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. <sup>29</sup> Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, <sup>30</sup> would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, <sup>31</sup> therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices. <sup>32</sup> For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them; <sup>33</sup> but whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster."

בְּלֵב נְבוֹן תְּנוּחַ חֲכָמָה  
וּבְקִרְבַּ כְּסִילִים תִּגְדַּע

**Pr 14:33** Wisdom rests in the heart of a man of understanding, but it makes itself known even in the midst of fools.

**Eph 5:15** Βλέπετε οὖν ἀκριβῶς πῶς περιπατεῖτε μὴ ὡς ἄσοφοι ἀλλ' ὡς σοφοί

**Eph 5:15** Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise

OUTLINE

**0. INTRODUCTION**

- 0.1. WISDOM AND THE GOSPEL
- 0.2. WISDOM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
- 0.3. THE CONCEPT OF WISDOM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
- 0.4. PERSONIFICATION OF WISDOM IN PROVERBS

**1. WISDOM IS ATTRACTIVE**

- 1.1. SUCCESS
- 1.2. HONOUR

**2. WISDOM IS AVAILABLE TO ALL**

- 2.1. THEMES OF WISDOM → QUESTIONS OF IMPORTANCE
- 2.2. THE PROBLEM: LOVE FOR FOOLISHNESS
- 2.3. NOT WITHOUT EFFORT

**3. WISDOM GIVES THE SOLID FOUNDATION FOR LIFE**

- 3.1. SALVATION
- 3.2. SOCIETY

**4. TO REMEMBER**

**0. INTRODUCTION**

- In religion, we put stress on FAITH rather than on WISDOM. ⇒ a lack in wise communication of the gospel ["Anknüpfungspunkt"] and a lack of wise decisions in christian life → Eph 5:15
- Religion is not just a "personal matter" → "privately engaging but publicly irrelevant" (quoted by Guinness: *The Gravedigger File*) →

[ROZAK *Where the Wasteland Ends*] Christian faith — the willful belief of the unbelievable—was never better than a poor substitute for sacramental experience; but even dutiful belief in a transcendent dimension of life has long since degenerated into mere opinion, socially irrelevant, even if privately engaging.

- Slovak: [MSJ] “múdry” - obdarený dobrým rozumom, úsudkom, majúci potrebné vedomosti.
- [Oxford] “wisdom” - Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends; sometimes, less strictly, sound sense, esp. in practical affairs.

### 0.1. WISDOM AND THE GOSPEL

- **1Cor 1:18-21** For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And the cleverness of the clever I will set aside." <sup>20</sup> Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.
- **James 1:5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. (Εἰ δέ τις ἰμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, αἰτείτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ.)

### 0.2. WISDOM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- Wisdom for EVANGELISM → what everybody knows...
- Wisdom for SANCTIFICATION → what a Christian can learn in the world, in the secular...
- SPIRITUAL
  - **1Cor 2:6-7** Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. <sup>7</sup> But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.... **1Cor 2:13-16** And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. <sup>14</sup> The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup> The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. <sup>16</sup> "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.
- ETHICAL
  - **James 3:13-18** Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup> This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup> And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
- PERSONAL
  - **1Cor 1:24** but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God
  - **1Cor 1:30** Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

### 0.3. THE CONCEPT OF WISDOM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- The Pursuit of Knowledge: Proverbs
  - **Pro 8:12** "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence (עֲרֻמָּה), and I find knowledge (יָדַעַת) and discretion (מִזְמוּת).

- The Search for Divine Presence: Job
- The Chasing after Meaning: Ecclesiastes

#### 0.4. PERSONIFICATION OF WISDOM IN PROVERBS

- Wisdom is ACTIVE in the world – addressing everyone – it is not a passively existing knowledge that waits to be discovered (like “laws” of nature)
- Wisdom REPRESENTS the Spirit of God without making “religious” pretentions.

### 1. WISDOM IS ATTRACTIVE

[Toward General Education] Not long ago as history is reckoned the common man of Europe was subject to fine for attempting to educate his children. Education for one class and the lack of it for another was a means of keeping aristocrats and common folk apart. Following the Reformation, literacy — specifically the ability to read the Bible — became for many Protestant groups a condition of salvation.

#### 1.1. SUCCESS

- Jos 1:8 is the only place the word *success* is found in the King James translation. Success is the Hebrew word *sakal* (שָׂכַל), meaning to be prudent, be circumspect, to act wisely, to understand, to prosper, give attention to, consider, ponder, to have insight, have comprehension, to act circumspectly, act prudently
- Genesis 39:3 ...the LORD gave him success (צִלַּח) in everything he did
- **Psalm 1:3** He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers (וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲשֶׂה יִצְלִיחַ)

#### 1.2. HONOUR

- **Proverbs 3:16** Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor.

[אֶרְךָ יָמִים בְּיְמֵינָהּ בְּשִׂמְאוֹלָהּ עֵשֶׂר וְכֹבֹד]

Dospelí s vyšším dosiahnutým vzdelaním častejšie v prieskumoch oznamujú, že majú dobré zdravie, zúčastňujú sa na dobrovoľníckych činnostiach, dôverujú druhým a majú pocit, že ich názory berie vláda na vedomie. Inými slovami, dospelí s vyšším vzdelaním sa zvyčajne viac angažujú vo svete okolo nich.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. WISDOM IS AVAILABLE TO ALL

#### 2.1. THEMES OF WISDOM → WEIGHTY QUESTIONS

- In the street → daily life (chaotic movement; change) ⇒ TRUTH; VALUES; PERMANENCY
- In the city gates → authority, government, justice (**Pr 8:16** "By me princes rule, and nobles, All who judge rightly) ⇒ the question of THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY;
- just/wicked, good/evil, rich/poor, diligent/lazy, wise/fool...
- THE FEAR OF THE LORD
- THE DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION
- CREATION
- COMMUNICATION
- DEATH AND MEANING OF LIFE
- DISCIPLINE; REBUKE; UPBRINGING...

#### 2.2. THE PROBLEM: LOVE FOR FOOLISHNESS

ESCAPING INTO THE SHALLOWNESS of the pop culture...

- Pr 1:22 "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?  
(עַד-מָתַי פְּתִימִים תֵּאָהָבוּ פְתִי וְלֹצִים לְצֹן הַמִּדְרוֹ לָהֶם וְכִסִּילִים יִשְׁנֹאוּ-דָעַת)
- Ps 14:1 The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God'

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/3e63fbf9-sk/index.html?itemId=/content/component/3e63fbf9-sk>  
(28. 10. 2023)

- Reductionism → simplification; shallowness; pragmatism...
- challenge: wait for the power of the Spirit!

### 2.3. NOT WITHOUT EFFORT

- **Pr 4:7** The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight.  
(רֵאשִׁית חָכְמָה קִנְיָה חָכְמָה וּבְכָל־קִנְיָנֶיךָ קִנְיָה בִינָה)

## 3. WISDOM GIVES THE SOLID FOUNDATION FOR LIFE

- **Mt 7:24-27** "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to **a wise man**, who built his house upon the rock. <sup>25</sup> "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. <sup>26</sup> "And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. <sup>27</sup> "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall."

### 3.1. SALVATION

- **Luke 16:8-9** "And his master praised the unrighteous steward because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light. <sup>9</sup> "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings."

### 3.2. SOCIETY

- [*The Idea and Practice of General Education*] ...the success of [our] democracy depends ultimately upon the wisdom of [our] people.

## 4. TO REMEMBER

- Begin with the most important matters (Knowing God through Jesus Christ).
- Be teachable, ask for wisdom from God and accept advice. (Guidance of the Holy Spirit)
- Accept difficulties of life with patience and persevere in obedience. (Discipline of the Father)