

Viral Messages #1
The Cost of trusting
March 29, 2020

(Read Proverbs 1:20-21; 8:1-5; 8:34-35)

This voice that is being described by Solomon that calls to us out of the everyday moments of life is called the wisdom of God. In the proverbs that we just read, this wisdom is personified as a woman searching through the streets for anyone who will listen to her. For those who do, she has wealth to share that is more precious than gold, silver, or jewels.

(Proverbs 8:6-17)

The voice of wisdom may call to us from anywhere, and from the most unlikely times. It may call to us through the business of our day or at some crossroads in our lives. We may hear the voice at church or in the midst of a mall. But I want you to understand this. Today, she is calling out to us the church. And she is calling us to a different way of living. She is calling out to us to live life the way God meant us to...in passionate relationship with Him and others. The Hebrew word for "wisdom" means "the skill of living life." That skill is learned by cultivating habits of the heart that heighten our sensitivity to hearing God's voice.

Much of what is sacred in this world is hidden in the ordinary, everyday moments of our lives.

To see those sacred moments, to be able to listen to wisdom as she speaks takes slowing down so we can live our lives in a more *reflective* manner. Here is where I want to remind you of what the word reflect means.

The word "reflect" comes from two Latin words:

"re" meaning **"back"** and **"flectere"** meaning **"to bend"**.

To reflect means to bend back something, like the way a mirror bends back an image, providing an opportunity for a closer look. Living reflectively provides opportunities during our day for a closer look at things, a people, at ourselves and at our God. The faster the pace of our life, the more we will miss those opportunities.

This is what Jesus is teaching His disciples when he points to a poor widow...as she reflects the passion of God's own Son.

Turn with me to Mark 12:41-44.

Please note that this offering was not required by law. This offering was given in thanks to the Lord for all that He had done for you. This was a freewill offering. This offering was not given to get anything from the Lord...it was just to say "thank-you". Also, please note that she gave both of her copper coins.

According to Jewish laws at that time, it was not permissible to cast in less than two gifts.

For the gift to be acceptable she had to give all she had.

In verses 43-44 Jesus displays for us the heart of someone who is seeking to live in a place where few have dared. A place of fellowship with God.

(Read vv. 43-44)

"But she, out of her poverty, put in all that she owned, all that she had to live on". Vs. 44b
Jesus calls upon the disciples to notice someone that is easily missed. He also calls them to notice a "gift" that was easily overlooked. He called them and is calling us, much like Solomon's

analogy of wisdom, to notice her passion. Her life. A life by many accounts that would have seemed fairly wasted. A poor life. Yet God holds her gift and her life in high esteem. This widow's life became a direct reflection of the God that she saw.

He was to her the God of the "Shema". Jehovah-Jireh. And she found fellowship with God. To have that fellowship was to her worth giving her all.

Here's the problem with what Jesus is showing us here. This skill of living life that He is trying to teach us is on a direct collision course with our culture whose goals are power, position autonomy, and control.

In the real world, someone who intentionally chooses to love God this way is just asking to be taken advantage of, manipulated, or to put it plainly...just walked on. But there is something that is even deeper still that keeps us from giving our all.

Deep down, all of us cringe at the thought of giving up our independence to another's control. To willingly put our welfare into God's hands.

This resistance relates directly to our fallenness...it is a condition that we have inherited from birth.

Here's the rub with all of this.

God created us to follow and be totally dependent. Being made in God's image means we are designed for a reflective following relationship to our Creator. Adam and Eve were given responsibilities that defined how they were to follow God, and then they were released to enjoy all that He had made. God was the singular pursuit of their lives, and their environment was a place to express their lives as an act of gratitude and love.

Life then turned sour when Adam and Eve were seduced by the offer of a supposedly better and more independent kind of life. (Gen. 3:1-6)

Since Adam and Eve took Satan's offer of a self-managed approach to life, nothing that we touch, taste, feel, or do has ever been the same...for any of us.

I want you to know that that this is the essence of sin itself.

That we can live our lives without the wisdom of God.

Note this; that first couple gained anything but a better and more independent life.

Everything broke around them.

They became enslaved. They didn't cease to follow...it's just that now they were locked into following their misguided, misdirected fallen instincts instead of God.

Since we were designed to follow, we spend our entire lives following...it's just that no one wants to admit it. Sin strives for independence.

The agony of sin is that the more that we reach for that independence, the more we become enslaved as followers. The more we do life our way, the more we lose our independence. Whether the agent is drugs, food, work, pleasure, religion, or self-centeredness, independent living leads us to destruction.

The greatest lie that we can believe is to tell ourselves that we can be self-sufficient.

(That's why we hoard toilet paper) surely our neighbor won't share...

We can spend our whole lives searching for something that can be found only in a restored relationship to Him...but the very thing we are searching for we refuse to find. The issue in our rebellious hearts is that we don't want to follow Christ.

At least not at the level of that widow. When she dropped those two coins in she reflected back to us all that we have been searching for. A place to finally put our lives back in order. A place to put our stuff. And trust in our God.

This sense of searching, from which we cannot escape, is present because we were created to live in a relationship with God, who would show us how to live. We are built to follow the One in whose image we were created.

The purpose of this relationship was to enable us to live with Someone who cared for us, who with superior wisdom and power could guide and protect us. Someone in whom we could find fulfillment and satisfaction. A relationship where we could be "whole" again. This is why in every human heart there is this haunting feeling inside us that there is "Someone" somewhere who could finally show us a more fulfilling, more meaningful way of life.

That widow found Him. And it was worth all that she had...