

INI - SDG

20th Sunday a. Trinity
October 25, 2009
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
Hecla, SD

Text: Proverbs 2:1-8 *My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasure; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom, from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints.*

Theme: TREASURE!

- The knowledge of God is a treasure
- Treasure the knowledge of God

Dear fellow redeemed in Christ Jesus,

When you hear the word “treasure” what comes to mind? What I think of is a pirate’s treasure that was buried long ago on some deserted island. To find the treasure you need to find the map where “X” marks the spot. Once you’ve found the map and found the island, then you need to dig - dig until you find that treasure chest buried in the sand. That treasure chest is full of all sorts of booty which the pirates plundered. There are gold coins, diamonds, and emeralds. That’s what I think of when I hear the word “treasure.”

But we also use the word “treasure” in another way, don’t we. We use the word “treasure” as a noun like, “Searching for buried treasure.” But don’t we sometimes use the word as a verb too? We “treasure” those things that are precious to us. We treasure the time we spend with our family. We treasure the memories of Christmases gone by. We treasure our toys. We treasure those items from our families history.

As we consider our text from Proverbs 2 today, we find that the Holy Spirit led Solomon to use the word “treasure” in both these ways. In verse 1 he writes, *“treasure my commands within you.”* Then in verse 4 he writes, *“search for her as for a hidden treasure.”* So let us consider this word treasure in these two ways with regards to the knowledge of God. How the knowledge of God is a treasure which we should treasure. May God help us so to do!

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS A TREASURE

Searching for treasure is no longer as simple as counting out 50 paces from the coconut tree to the place where “X” marks the spot. Today a team of explorers will take a ship off the coast of Africa and send a submarine robot to the ocean floor in search of a sunken ship and it’s cargo. Or a team of archeologists might spend years digging through the soil in South America in search of an ancient Mayan village. Or searching for treasure might be as simple as walking on the beach with a metal detector, looking for coins and jewelry that beach-goers left behind.

There is another kind of treasure that people spend their whole lives searching for. This

treasure is not made of silver, gold, and precious gems. Yet people will search high and low for it. They spare no expense trying to attain this treasure. That treasure is wisdom. Think of the great lengths people will go to gain wisdom. I have a high school classmate that is STILL going to school. He has spent 27 of his 32 years on this earth going to school in the pursuit of wisdom. In the pursuit of wisdom our nation has sent robots to other planets and shot missiles at the moon. All to attain gain more treasure for their chest of wisdom.

One of the wisest men that has ever lived on this planet is King Solomon. After Solomon took over the throne of his father David, the LORD God appeared to him in a dream and said, **“Ask! What shall I give you?”** (1 Kings 3:5) What would your reply have been? Wealth? Fame? Power? Listen to Solomon’s reply - **“Give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil.”** (3:9) When Solomon could have asked for anything from the LORD, he asked for wisdom and the LORD blessed Solomon with great wisdom. Wisdom that was only surpassed by one of his descendants, namely, Jesus Christ.

And now as Solomon writes the book of Proverbs, he wishes to pass along some of this wisdom to his son. But there is more than that going on here than just Solomon speaking with his son. This is the LORD God speaking through Solomon to us, His children. Our heavenly Father is having a heart-to-heart talk with us about true wisdom.

When you talk about wisdom, about having answers, what questions do all men want to know the answers to? Is it not the pivotal questions of, “Where did we come from?” “Why are we here?” And, “Where are we going?” People want to know what their purpose is here on this earth. NASA spends roughly \$17 billion a year exploring space, in hopes of trying to answer the question of where we came from. People spend millions of dollars every year on self-help books that try to answer the question “Why are we here?” And as for the question, “Where are we going?” that is a the question that people die hoping the get it right.

We want wisdom, we want answers. And the LORD here in our text, spurs us on to search for that wisdom like someone would search for a hidden treasure. **“My son, ...if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures.”** We all want understanding. We want to understand where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going.

This desire for understanding and answers is really rooted in our natural knowledge of God. Man realizes that there has to be more to life than just being born, going to work, and dying. Man by nature knows there is something bigger than himself out there. He knows there is a god out there, but doesn’t know who that God is. As the psalmist writes, **“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.”** (Ps 42:2)

But where can this thirst for the knowledge of the living God be quenched? Such knowledge cannot be gained by sending robots to Mars or missiles to the moon. Rock and soil samples from the Grand Canyon will not give you a knowledge of the living God. And most of the professors at the universities of this world will not be able to quench this thirst for answers to life’s questions. Such a thirst for the knowledge of God is only quenched by God’s Word. When you search His Word, **“then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.”** You will find the knowledge of God. God gives you that wisdom Himself. It comes from His own mouth and has been recorded by His holy writers on the pages of Scripture.

Think of the value of the knowledge of God! By inclining your ear to this wisdom and

applying your heart to this understanding you find the answers to life's questions. Where did we come from? God reveals that to us in the first two chapters of this book. God created the world, universe and everything in it in six days. He took special interest and care when He created man. He made man in His own image of perfect righteousness and holiness. He formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And then when man found nothing on this planet comparable to him, God created woman for man - to compliment and complete him. That is where we came from.

Why are we here? This too is answered if you search the Scriptures. God has given us our time of grace on this earth to learn about Him and tell others about Him. More on why we are here in a moment.

Where are we going? The answer to this deeply probing question is answered by God in His Word and it is more amazing than anyone could have possibly imagined. ***“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*** (1 Cor 2:9) Though man was created in God's image, man rebelled against God and broke fellowship with Him. Because of sin man's relationship with God was ruined forever. Man no longer saw God as his friend, but his enemy and judge. And because of sin, death entered the world. And death spread to all men, because all sinned. (Rom 5:12) Where are we going? Because of sin man was headed to hell where we would be eternally separated from God.

Though man had ruined the perfect relationship he had with God, God was determined to fix it. But in order to make right our relationship with Him, He had to remove our sin. Being a just God He could not simply ignore sin. The punishment for sin had to be carried out. To do this reason God sent His most prized possession in the whole universe, His Son, into the world to be our Substitute. Jesus was born to redeem us from sin and reconcile us unto God. He came to make right what we by our sin had made wrong. He took all of our ugly sins on Himself and suffered in our place. He died and was buried and our sins died with Him. When He rose from the dead on the third day, God was announcing to the world that the punishment for sin had been carried out and we are now justified in Jesus Christ. Our sin has been removed forever.

Where are we going? Through faith in Jesus Christ we are not headed to an eternity of punishment, but an eternity in paradise to enjoy our perfect fellowship with God!

This is the treasure that is the knowledge of God. When you search the Scriptures as one searches for hidden treasure, there you find the knowledge of God. We now know why we are here. We have purpose in life. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit! We are living sacrifices. We are children of light and the salt of the earth. We are here to proclaim the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness. This is the priceless treasure that is the knowledge of God. It is the wisdom which the LORD gives through His Word.

TREASURE THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

But remember, “treasure” is not just a noun, it's also used as verb. We often speak of “treasuring” those things that are most precious to us. Can there be anything more precious than the knowledge of God? Is there anything more precious than knowing that through faith in Jesus God is our true Father and we are His true children? Let us treasure this knowledge of God which He has given us in His Word.

How do we treasure the knowledge of God? Solomon writes in the first two verses of our text, ***“My son, if you receive my words, and TREASURE my commands within***

you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding.” We treasure the knowledge of God by keeping His Word in our hearts and minds. We treasure the knowledge of God when we receive His Words. That is we don't merely come to church as pew potatoes, but we come as active listeners who have come to gladly hear and learn God's Word. We treasure the knowledge of God when we incline our ear to His wisdom. When we are attentive in church or Sunday School or Catechism class. We treasure the knowledge of God when we apply our heart to understanding. That is we dig into His Word. We take advantage of Bible Studies here at church and at home. We try to find out more and more about the knowledge of God. This is why we memorize God's Word. We are treasuring His commands within in us!

We treasure the knowledge of God because it is precious and valuable for our daily lives and our eternal future. In the closing verses Solomon writes, ***“He stores up wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the path of justice, and preserves the way of His saints.”*** Through His Word God directs us in our daily lives and protects us on our daily walk. Through His Word He preserves us, His saints, in the faith. Paul writes that His Word is the Sword of the Spirit, by which we can protect ourselves from the evil one and fight him off, even as Jesus did when He was tempted in the wilderness. Treasure the knowledge of God!

It is amazing the lengths people will go for knowledge. They'll strap themselves onto a rocket and fly into space to conduct scientific experiments. They'll spend their whole lives going to school and writing papers about the world around us. Yet none of this knowledge will not help them when they reach their grave. The only knowledge that truly is a treasure and worth treasuring is the knowledge of God as revealed in His Word. ***“Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it!”*** (Lk 11:28) Amen.