

Proverbs 8:22-31

“How some people misconstrue wisdom”

“The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; ²³ I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be. ²⁴ When there were no watery depths, I was given birth, when there were no springs overflowing with water; ²⁵ before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, ²⁶ before he made the world or its fields or any of the dust of the earth.

“²⁷ I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, ²⁸ when he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, ²⁹ when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.

“³⁰ Then I was constantly at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, ³¹ rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind.”

Today’s text suggests a subject you rarely hear in sermons.

Furthermore, the commentaries and sermons I read tend to misconstrue what the text says.

How big a problem do they create?

Only God knows, but be warned.

We recently spent about a week in Italy. Prior to going, we read warnings about protecting ourselves from forms of crime. Violent crime rarely occurs in the city we visited, but they warned us about pickpockets. We took the advice and avoided problems.

One couple we passed wasn’t so fortunate. Thieves took items out of his backpack as they walked a crowded street.

Whether the couple could afford the loss we don’t know.

We usually recover from losses of possessions.

The Bible repeatedly warns us about being deceived by false teachers; they steal truth. Consequences of deception about our relationships with God last forever.

Nothing can help you if you lose that.
Check the Word of God; make sure
religious teachers tell you the truth.



A charming shaded stream flows south in the Fern Dell section of L.A.'s Griffith Park.

Fern Dell has served as the setting of numerous movies and still-photos.

The Griffith Park Observatory is located farther up the mountain.



The Hollywood church held many pancake breakfasts at a nearby picnic area.

At the bottom of the hill on Los Feliz Boulevard years ago, city fathers built a monument and installed a water spigot.

At one time, so the story goes, pure mountain stream water from the area flowed through that faucet.

In the 1960s, many Angeleños brought water containers to that spigot and filled them.

We haven't walked the path for decades.

Even in the 1960s, however, the path and stream were strewn with ugly urban debris, e.g. food wrappers, cigarette butts, etc.

Our elderly friend Ralph and others drove to Los Feliz (Fern Dell) and filled large water containers.

Ralph claimed the water from that faucet was “the best, purest water there is.”

I asked a city official about the source of the water from that faucet.

Was it actually Fern Dell water?

He reckoned that at one time, the water might have come from the stream.

For decades, however, it was just ordinary city water no different from the water piped to Ralph’s and every other home in L.A.

This true story helps me introduce an important question: “When you listen to the verbal flow of preachers, are you really hearing the pure word of the Lord?”

In John 4, Jesus promised life-giving water: **“the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”**¹

**Do you hear Jesus’ teaching from pulpits?
Or are you hearing human philosophy
and human tradition?**

You hear the phrase, “You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”

Sometimes you hear a shorter version:

“The truth will set you free.”

If you hear only those phrases, you get a virtual trickle of truth.

Here’s the full quotation from Jesus:

“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”²

The full quotation puts an entirely different light on truth, doesn’t it?
The reality for many people is in their hand held iPhones or iPads or what SIRI and ALEXA tell them.

To them, all the life-info they need is at their fingertips.

If that describes where you are, walk outside tonight away from all the nearby lights and look to the sky.

Virtually all the stars you see are part of the Milky Way galaxy, in which we live.

Astronomers tell us that countless galaxies similar to the Milky Way exist.

The stars we see comprise a tiny fraction of the whole.

The next time you get to a beach, try counting the grains of sand around you.

The stars are that numerous.

¹ John 4:14b NIV

² John 8: 31, 32 NV

In the beginning, God our Creator, made all the stars in the incalculable galaxies and named each one.

Does it make more sense to you to follow what the Creator says is right or to follow the opinions of some intellectually elite folks, who will be dead in a few decades?

How wise are these cerebral talking heads who so confidently advise us in the media?

Last night you likely ate a tasty multi-course meal: meat, veggies, bread, and dessert.

As you chewed that steak, hamburger, hot dog, chicken, or walleye, your mouth watered and the process of digestion began.

We won't ask what liquids you used to accompany the repast you enjoyed.

As you swallowed that scrumptious meal and sent it “south,” along a canal several feet long, powerful juices began altering that food.

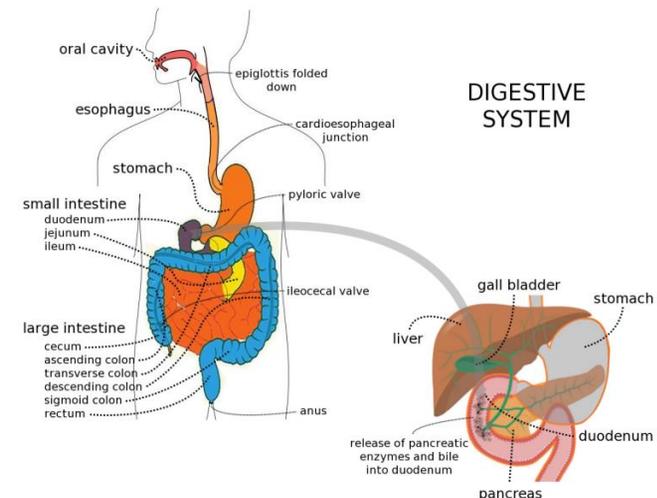
While that supper collation proceeded through your innards, your stomach, intestines and numerous organs extracted vitamins, minerals, sugars, salts, storing some and immediately using others to help

you walk, talk, think and see—so you can make it to the next meal.

You didn't have to press any buttons or apps or send any texts or tweets to help that metabolism process.

It worked almost without any assistance-unless, of course, you ate too much or excessively imbibed.

No robot comes close to duplicating the process I so unscientifically described. **In the meantime, you breathed without thinking, and you talked, watched, thought, and maybe slept some.**



Perhaps even more amazing, your parents produced and shared tiny procreative stuff encoded so that all these organs required for you to live from birth to adulthood would develop and function as at supper last night.

Civilization’s best minds do not understand all the processes we inelegantly described.

University and private scientific labs intensively study and investigate to understand these processes which occur billions of times daily all over the planet.

Yet many bright minds in universities, schools, think tanks, and tech labs insist these stupendously complex processes came accidentally.

Not one human being or combination of minds grasps all the functions in one human body.

When you consider the complexity of life and the vastness of space, do you really think that all of this came about accidentally?

The Bible tells us that the Creator of time and space visited this little planet.

He taught us how to escape the hate, the pride, the misery, the disease, and the immorality, that lead to our mortality.

By believing and committing our lives to love and respect for our Creator, we begin new life that leads to immortality.

Considering God’s power, intelligence, and awesome abilities, why wouldn’t we want to fear him, respect him, love him, and honor him above all other things?

Why wouldn’t we demand the whole, pure truth that comes straight from our Creator?

Proverbs 1:7 reads:

“Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”

Unless we fear the Creator, our knowledge remains skewed and wisdom escapes us.

Many religious leaders teach that our text speaks about Jesus’ origin:

“The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; 23 I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be.”

Numerous church and religious leaders routinely accept this idea.

Let me share three brief good reasons the supposition that God created Jesus is off base.

1. In the beginning, Jesus was God and was active in Creation states John 1: 1.
2. **Not one New Testament writer applies this Proverbs text to Jesus.**
3. **Both in Hebrew and Greek, nouns have gender.**

Wisdom is always feminine; in fact, Proverbs 1:20 reads:

“Out in the open wisdom calls aloud, she raises her voice in the public square; 21 on top of the wall she cries out, at the city gate she makes her speech . . .”

Jesus and Christ are masculine.

As we noted, the very best minds struggle to define to God’s Creation.

Trying to explain God presents an even greater challenge.

In fact church people didn’t attempt it until after 300 AD.

Before that time, church people were too busy trying to survive persecution.

Since about the 4th century AD, religious leaders have wasted lots of time trying to describe the Godhead. In the Nicene and Apostles’ creeds they tried to define the relationships between Father, Son and, Holy Spirit.

The Apostles did not write the Apostles’ Creed.

Human beings from the fourth century AD and later wrote those creeds.

Children that love and appreciate their parents don’t need long explanations of their parents’ history and existence.

There’s time later for those investigations.

I can’t tell you many details of the relationship between the Father and the Son.

A few Bible passages in John, 1 Corinthians, Philippians, and Colossians give some insights.

In the future, God willing, we can explore their meanings.

From my experience, however I can tell you a lot about God’s love.

The more I trust him, the more acquainted I become with his love.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church about the tests of faith they faced because the “smart” people of their time rejected God.

He could well have been writing concerning scoffers in our time

1 Corinthians 2:1-9:

“Brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ² For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. ⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive

words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.

⁶ We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ No, we declare God’s wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

⁹ However, as it is written:

‘What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived’— the things God has prepared for those who love him—”

God bless you as you honor and fully exalt our Creator in Christ!

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