

PROVERBS 2: 1-15

My child, if you accept my words
and treasure up my commandments within you,
² making your ear attentive to wisdom
and inclining your heart to understanding;
³ if you indeed cry out for insight,
and raise your voice for understanding;
⁴ if you seek it like silver,
and search for it as for hidden treasures—
⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD
and find the knowledge of God.
⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom;
from God's mouth come knowledge and understanding;
⁷ God stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
God is a shield to those who walk blamelessly,
⁸ guarding the paths of justice
and preserving the way of his faithful ones.
⁹ Then you will understand righteousness and justice
and equity, every good path;
¹⁰ for wisdom will come into your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
¹¹ prudence will watch over you;
and understanding will guard you.
¹² It will save you from the way of evil,
from those who speak perversely,
¹³ who forsake the paths of uprightness
to walk in the ways of darkness,
¹⁴ who rejoice in doing evil
and delight in the perverseness of evil;
¹⁵ those whose paths are crooked,
and who are devious in their ways.

How much do you want wisdom in your life? How much are you hungry to live authentically, committed to the way of compassion, justice and truth through a wisdom rooted in love before God? These 15 verses are carefully crafted into 4 parts indicated by key words:

- 1) Verses 1-5: **If** you hunger for wisdom, insight and understanding, more than silver and all earthly, material treasures, **then** you will understand the fear (reverence, respect) of the Lord and gain the knowledge/wisdom God has to offer you in your life.
- 2) Verses 6-8: **For** God gives wisdom, knowledge, understanding, **and God will** shield, guard, and preserve those faithful and committed to walking uprightly and blamelessly in the paths of justice and the ways of sincere compassion.

- 3) Verses 9-11: **Then** you will understand righteousness, justice, equity, and every good path, **for** wisdom and knowledge will have entered your heart and soul.
- 4) Verses 12-15: And this is essential for **it will save you** from the slippery influence of evil and those who have sold themselves to its ways through devious and perverse choices in which they delight (because of the worldly advantages it gains).

Clearly, then, wisdom is about living your life with integrity and with compassion and justice in all your relationships. It requires discernment, it is established by God (therefore we humans need to tap into it and absorb it) and it is what we are truly made for. The world around us is full of traps and snares, as people regularly sell their souls for some material and social advantage, and often to the neglect if not disadvantage and harm of their neighbours. And unless we are given and then cultivate a desire for wisdom more than any other earthly gain or advantage, we will not get very far in absorbing it and becoming shaped by it in our relations.

What do you think? Do you thirst for more wisdom to inspire you, fill you and shape your ways of relating and engaging the world around you? How much do you really want it, especially as the pressures, fears, aggravations, and disappointments of life along with the lures of greed can lead you into the loss of who we are called to be before God?

PRAYER: Give us a hunger and thirst for your wisdom, O God... Stir our hearts with conviction and desire, commitment, and resolve... Remind us of what truly matters in life and help us push away those distractions, temptations, attachments, and habits in our lives that get in the way of a singular love and reverence rooted in you above all else... We pray, we open ourselves and we wait... And we commit ourselves to evaluating particular habits, attachments, and associations in our lives that pull us down this coming week... Amen.