

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The intelligence of the world, the world's reason, the world's finest knowledge, is foolishness in God's eyes. For, the Apostle writes, the world through its wisdom did not know God. God came, and the world rejected Him. So it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached, the Holy Gospel, to save those who believe.

By faith there is a wisdom that transcends the fallen world. So God the Spirit writes through King Solomon of God the Son. He writes in Proverbs of that wisdom that you should desire, indeed seek it as one seeks silver. But that wisdom is tied immediately to the Word of God. If you don't know the Scriptures, you'll never have true wisdom. But, God says through Solomon, "...if you receive My Words, and treasure My Commands within you", then you begin to understand. By faith you "apply your heart to understanding" which is to meditate on God's Word.

Faith, David's son writes, cries out for discernment, and lifts up its voice for understanding. And as the Spirit of God works through the Word, as faith is fed and nourished, as you grow in true knowledge and understanding, "you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." And St. Paul writes "Christ, the power of God and the Wisdom of God."

By faith, by Divine Gift, Solomon understood what Paul knew. He believed in the Christ promised of old, the Christ to come. So he chronicles the role of Wisdom, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, in the creation of the world. Wisdom, God the Son, is the Master Craftsman of the creation. To know God is to know Christ. Apart from faith in Christ, one cannot know God. When one knows Christ, when one believes in Christ, one gains true wisdom. The Word of God is open to you. And then you are immediately at odds with the world.

But without such wisdom, true wisdom, the Words of God are obscure and indiscernible. So the world mocks and ridicules God and His Word. And men prefer temporal goods to spiritual gifts. Men prefer farms and businesses rather than God's invitation to eternal life.

That's why the Lord spoke in parables – so that those with faith would hear and understand, and those without faith could not understand. And so it was with the Parable of the Wedding Feast. Hear then and understand – the Lord speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven as He says "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy."

In this Parable is revealed the mystery of the doctrine of election. God is gracious. He is the God Who Provides, the God who prepares everything and chooses guests. But God knew from the foundation of the world that the Jews would show themselves unworthy, that they would try to take the Kingdom by force. And God knew from eternity that Gentiles would be invited to the Wedding Feast, that the wild branch would be grafted in, and that of those in the visible church, there would be some that do not have faith. If you have true wisdom, you know that is the meaning of the parable.

"The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy." These are horrible Words of condemnation. The promises of the Prophets have come to fruition, but those to whom the Prophets were sent rejected them. They seized them, treated them spitefully, and killed them.

So for them there is only wrath. And so the Apostle writes “see then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” The Prophets’ and Apostles’ and Evangelists’ tombs testify to their mistreatment, to their martyrdom. But they entered the Feast. They enjoy the banquet which has no end, the marriage Feast of the Lamb.

Most, however, will not enter the Feast. Many are they that will hear that terrible proclamation. It will be so with everyone who rejects the Promises of God, and everyone that rejects those He sends to proclaim them. Everyone not vested in the wedding garment will be cast out. That vestment is holiness and righteousness.

But it is not the holiness or righteousness of men, for that is insufficient. So of everyone who sins, of the transgressor, of the one that will not heed the Word of God, of the one that rejects the Truth, the king says to His servants “Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” It is a horrible proclamation indeed. And if you have sinned, it is the just proclamation for you.

But thanks be to God, that in His mercy, in His Wisdom, His servants have been sent into the highways to find men to fill the wedding hall. No one is worthy. But in love, that His hall be filled, that the Kingdom of Heaven be complete, God sent the Prophets and Apostles and Evangelists to proclaim that the Father sent His Son to die for the sins of the world.

It is He, God the Son, the Wisdom of God, that was bound and taken away. It is He that was cast into the darkness of Golgotha, He that wept, He that was treated spitefully and killed. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil – but the Lord is Holy. He is Good. And His will is that you be saved, that you be granted the saving wisdom of faith, that you know the Wisdom of God Who is Christ Jesus our Lord.

In His Wisdom He wins life for you by dying. In His Wisdom He earns righteousness for you by rising from the dead. In His Wisdom God the Father prepares the Feast, the Sacrifice is finished, making all things ready, and elects you from the foundation of the world. In His Wisdom He uses His Word and Sacraments to bring you to faith, saving faith in Christ. And in His Wisdom He forgives you all your sins, because you believe that Jesus Christ died and rose for you.

And the God of Mercy freely gives that gleaming white vestment of His righteousness to all those who believe in Him, to you, dear Christian, that His Feast be filled, that heaven be filled. In His Wisdom He gives you the very faith He requires, that you believe, that you have true wisdom, that you know what the will of the Lord is. And that wisdom, the wisdom of faith, gives thanks always for all things to God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So incline your ear to wisdom, and hear Christ. Apply your heart to understanding, and know Christ. Cry out for discernment and lift up your voice for understanding, and learn Christ. Kneel, eat and drink, and receive Christ, the Treasure hidden under Bread and Wine. And when the King returns, when He comes to see the guests, you will be vested in His righteousness, and enter into Glory, into the rich heavenly provision of His Wedding Feast.

St. Matthew 22:1-14
The Second Sunday after Michaelmass, 2017 A.✠D.

For you enter not as a guest, but as the chaste and pure Bride, the beloved of the Bridegroom, who gave Himself for you, who gives Himself to you, you who are the elect of God. For many are called, but few are chosen.

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