

Proverbs 1:1-7

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[0:00] Good morning, church. My name is Matthew Capone, and I'm the pastor here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church, and it's my joy to bring God's word to you today.

Special welcome if you're new with us. We'd love for you to go to our website at cmpca.net, and there will be a pop-up immediately for our digital visitor card. We encourage you to fill that out. That gives us a chance to connect with you and to help you connect with our community here. Whether you are new or not, I remind you, as I do every week, that while we can see numbers, we can't always see names, and while you can see me, I can't see you.

And so I encourage you to make a comment in the comment box at the bottom right of the Facebook video. You can say something as simple as, hello, everyone, or good morning. You can share who you're watching with or where you're watching from, and that will give us a sense of who's here with us and also a sense of gathering together even as we're separated during this time. Today, we're going to start a series for this summer in the book of Proverbs. And the book of Proverbs is a book in the Old Testament, which is the part of the Bible that was written before Jesus came. And it's a book that contains Proverbs.

[1:11] You probably know that Proverb is a short saying that teaches a truth. We have these in our culture today. You'll hear people say things like this, time is money. Or you might hear someone say, measure twice, cut once.

And those are short, pithy sayings that capture a lot of truth, something that people generally agree about. Time is money. When you spend time on something, sometimes you can save that by spending money.

Measure twice, cut once. Planning really matters. And if you plan well, you won't have to do something over again. Now, the book of Proverbs includes these types of sayings, and it's not less than that, but it's actually much more than that.

It's a book about wisdom. And wisdom is the study of how to live well in this world. That's what we're gonna be looking at this morning, at the very beginning, the introduction to the book of Proverbs.

Before we jump in, though, I wanna point out one thing as we're going through this book together as a community. The book of Proverbs is a community book. It's a group project. It's wisdom is something that we work on together.

[2:11] And it just so happens that the book of Proverbs has 31 chapters in it, which is the maximum number of days in any month on the calendar. So one thing that my family and I did growing up, and actually is a practice that's been in the church for quite some time, is the practice of reading the chapter of Proverbs that goes along with the calendar day.

So for example, if it's the 1st of June, you'd read the first chapter of the book of Proverbs. If it's the 5th of July, you'd read the fifth chapter of the book of Proverbs. I encourage you all to consider that, doing that as individuals or families during this time.

It's a wonderful Bible reading program, and it's a great way to let the Proverbs sink in. Proverbs are something that we have to chew on and think about over a long period of time. And so I just wanna commend that to you as we begin.

During this time of quarantine, one of the things I've done is I signed up for Disney Plus, and I've been slowly working through the Star Wars series, starting at episode one. And if you're familiar with Star Wars, of course, you know that the beginning of every movie, there's the scrolling text that goes by to give you the background information you need to know before you enter into the story. That's what we're gonna see this morning in the book of Proverbs. We're going to be looking in chapter one, verses one through seven, and it's the introduction to the book. It's going to give us the

paradigm and the framework that we need to tackle everything else that's going to follow in all 31 of these chapters.

[3 : 33] And so as we come to this, we're gonna simply ask a couple of questions. First of all, what is wisdom? And second, how do we get it? What is wisdom and how do we get it?

It's with those that we're gonna turn to Proverbs chapter one. I invite you to turn with me either on a web browser, on your computer, you can turn on your phone, turn in your Bible, however you do it. Remember that this is God's word.

And Proverbs chapter 30, verse five, tells us that every word of God proves true. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Since for that reason that we read now, starting at verse one, the Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel, to know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity, to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth.

Verse five, let the wise hear and increase in learning and the one who understands obtain guidance. To understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction. I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word.

[5 : 09] Our Father in heaven, we praise you and we thank you that you promise us in James chapter one, verse five, that you give wisdom to those who ask.

We thank you that one of the ways you've given us wisdom is through the book of Proverbs. And we come now asking for that wisdom and that help, that you would send your spirit now to be with us, that you would speak to us through your word, that you would use it to change us, and that you'd grow us up in wisdom.

We ask most importantly that we would know and see and understand Jesus as the ultimate embodiment and teacher and guide for us, that we can have wisdom, but we can only have it in him.

We ask these things, not because we have earned them or deserve them, but because we can ask them in Jesus' name. Amen. The story is often told of a king, and some of you may have heard this story before, who is presented with a very challenging situation.

There's two women, two prostitutes who live in the same house together, and they both give birth to children within several days of one another. And so they both have these newborns, and there's a tragedy that strikes.

[6 : 26] One of them accidentally lays on top of her newborn while she's sleeping, and the newborn dies. Well, no one else is in the house when this happens, and the claim is that one of the women, the woman whose child dies, switches her child with the one who is living.

And so there's a dispute between them. One mother says, hey, that child, the live child's actually mine. But the other mother claims the same. And so both of them are claiming that the child who's alive belongs to them, and they have to go to this king to have the dispute settled.

Well, there's an incredible challenge, right? There's no witnesses. Both of the children are around the same age, and both women are claiming that it's theirs.

And so what do you do in that kind of situation? Well, this king is a king of great wisdom, and so he comes up with a solution.

He says, well, since we can't agree about who this child belongs to, I just say we cut the child in half, and one half be given to each woman. At that point, one of the women says, yes, that sounds like a great plan.

[7 : 29] Let's do that. And the other one says, no, there's no way we can do that. Just give the other woman the child so that that doesn't have to happen. And at that point, the king realizes the truth of the situation, right?

The mother who says, just cut the child in half, that's the mother who's not the real mother. And the one who says, whatever needs to be done for this child to stay alive, that's the true mother.

And so he resolves the dispute, and everyone in the kingdom marvels at the wisdom of this king.

Now, the reason that story probably sounds familiar to many of you is it's a story from the Bible.

It's a story that shows up in 1 Kings 3 about a man named Solomon. He was the third king in the kingdom of Israel. And he's the king who had an opportunity to receive whatever he asked for.

And earlier in the chapter, God comes to him and says, what do you want? And of all the things that Solomon could ask for, he tells God, what I want is I want wisdom. And so God, impressed by this,

says you could have asked for many things.

[8 : 32] You could have asked for riches, for wealth, for honor. But since you've asked for wisdom, I'll give you that, and I'll give you everything else as well. And in fact, not only will I give you wisdom, but I will make you the wisest man who's ever lived.

The wisest man of anyone who's come before you, and the wisest man of anyone who's come after you. It's this king, King Solomon, that we meet at the very beginning here in chapter one.

We're told these are the Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel. And so we know right away that we have an authoritative voice. This is someone that we should listen to. It would be as if you had a book that you picked up about investments, and you realize this is a book written by Warren Buffett.

Well, I should probably listen to what he has to say. He's a good investor. He's one of the greatest investors. Here's Solomon, a man who's wise, man of the greatest wisdom.

So there's tremendous credibility there. Now, the story from 1 Kings 3 doesn't just tell us that Solomon has wisdom and he has credibility, but it gives us an example of what wisdom is.

[9 : 38] Wisdom goes beyond simply just knowing right from wrong, and it gets into the skill of working between those two. Solomon knew what was right. He wanted justice.

He wanted the mother, the true mother, to have the live child. And yet wanting those things and knowing those things, knowing the right goal, knowing right from wrong wasn't enough.

There was a skill that was necessary to navigate that situation. And so that highlights one aspect of wisdom for us as we're asking this question about what is wisdom. Wisdom is commonly defined as skill in the art of living.

Skill in the art of living. Some people have added skill in the art of righteous living or godly living. It's operating well in God's world.

It's operating well in the gray areas. It's saying, I know what's right and what's wrong, and there's this space in between that I need to navigate. In fact, that's a situation for many of us.

[10 : 39] Justice Solomon, it wasn't enough for him to know what was right. He needed to act within it. It's the same for us. So often we know what's right and wrong, and yet we're presented with very challenging situations. For example, you might be someone who's single and you want to be married.

Well, you know right from wrong, right? You know there are certain boundaries. You know if you're a Christian, God has commanded you to only marry other Christians. And yet within those boundaries, how do you make sure you're actually pursuing a relationship that's good?

How do you choose the right partner? Well, you need wisdom, right? On the one hand, you could have standards and requirements that are unrealistic. And so you could end up being single, wishing you were married.

On the other hand, your standards could be too low, right? You might marry another Christian, but it's a foolish choice, and you end up married, wishing you were single. And so how do you navigate that kind of decision?

Well, you need wisdom. We could say the same about conflict. Do you know that sometimes you have to have hard conversations with other people? Sometimes you have to engage in conflict.

[11 : 46] Well, how do you decide when it's time to overlook something that someone's done against you? And how do you decide when it's time to confront it? And when you do confront it, how do you confront it? Do you do it in a way that's strong and strident?

Do you do it in a way that's gentle and indirect? Do you do it in a way that's direct and clear? How do you navigate that kind of situation? Well, you need wisdom.

Maybe you're someone who knows that God has called his people to care for the poor. And yet you also know there are wise and helpful ways of doing that and unwise and unhelpful ways of doing that.

In fact, that's an issue for us here in Colorado Springs. As you drive around and you're parked at a traffic light, you may look on the median and see some of those signs that are around our town that say, please don't give money to panhandlers.

Give the money, but give it to one of the agencies that helps them. That's a statement of wisdom.

That's a way of saying, hey, we all know our goal here. We know that we want and are called by God to care for the poor.

[12 : 49] And yet in that, we have to navigate it well. We need incredible wisdom. And so our goal is good in many situations, but we need to have strategies and tactics.

We need to have a plan. Wisdom is the study of how to have those strategies and those tactics. That's what we see here in verses two and three.

The purpose of this book is to know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, and to receive instruction in wise dealing. All those situations that I just described would be situations that require wise dealing.

They'd be situations that require wisdom. And so wisdom helps us navigate the path of life. It's our first answer here to what is wisdom.

It helps us navigate the path of life. It doesn't just do that, however. It also helps us to stay on the path. That's what we see here, the second half of verse three.

[13 : 49] Wisdom is not just this skill in navigating certain situations, but there is a component to it about right versus wrong. We're receiving instruction here in wise dealing, but also, this is verse three, in righteousness, justice, and equity.

So wisdom is involved in knowing what's right and what's wrong. It's about navigating the path. It's also about staying on the path. It's not just good life advice.

And so we will find a variety of types of advice about a variety of situations in the book of Proverbs. Some of them will just be how to be wise with your money, how to be wise in relationships. Some of it will be about avoiding what's wrong.

We're going to receive many warnings in this book from staying out of situations that might lead to temptation. And so wisdom helps us to know when we put ourselves in a situation that isn't necessarily sinful in and of itself, but could easily and quickly lead to sin.

And on the other hand, it's going to help us to know how to put ourselves in situations that are going to lead to more and more righteousness. Wisdom is something that helps us understand how to fill the space between what's right and wrong.

[15 : 02] And it's also something that helps us to stay away, far away from what's wrong. We then see that wisdom here is for everyone. Verse four, it's for the simple and for the youth.

But it's also verse five for the wise. And so everyone needs to learn what's here in this book. We'll also see, and this is in verses two and six, that there's a skill even to reading the book of Proverbs. We'll talk about this more as we continue, but verse two, understand words of insight. Verse six, understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. In other words, there's a good and helpful and wise way to read Proverbs, and there's a foolish way to read them.

And so our goal as we go along is going to be to read them in a way that's wise, that interprets them as they're meant to be read. And so that gives us our first answer here.

What is wisdom? Wisdom is the skill, skill in the art of living. It's navigating the path of right, and it's staying far away from what's wrong. It's critical in all areas of our life.

[16 : 08] And so that raises our next question. If wisdom is so important, so critical to navigating what God has given us, how do we get it? How do we get wisdom?

Well, thankfully, the author of Proverbs doesn't leave us to wonder. We're told, verse seven, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Now, if you're familiar with the Bible, you know that this phrase, the fear of the Lord appears over and over, and that raises the question of what it actually means. First of all, we know what it doesn't mean. The fear of the Lord is not this great fear of God's wrath and destruction and punishment. We know that because we're told in 1 John 4, verse 18, that perfect love casts out fear. And the fear that's being talked about in that passage is the fear of judgment. The reason that it's not the fear of judgment is because the fear of the Lord is for people who belong to God.

And people who belong to God know that Jesus has paid the penalty for their sin. And so they don't have to fear that punishment. However, there is a real type of fear.

[17 : 19] And so if we know that's what it doesn't mean, we have to look into what the fear of the Lord actually does mean. This phrase appears almost 20 times in the book of Proverbs. And when it appears, there seems to be several things that are emphasized.

First of all, the fear of the Lord includes this hatred of and turning away from evil. We see that in Proverbs 3, verse 7, as well as chapter 8, verse 13.

People who fear the Lord love what God loves and they hate what God hates. There's another element to the fear of the Lord though that's emphasized even more. In fact, we see it in this verse,

verse 7.

Fools despise wisdom and instruction, which means that people who fear the Lord, what? Well, they love wisdom and instruction. So people who fear the Lord are people who are humble. They're teachable. They desire to learn and be taught by God. In fact, one of the characteristics of the fool, as it states here in verse 7, is they're not open to being taught.

[18:22] And so the book of Proverbs, learning wisdom, growing in wisdom, requires an acknowledgement, an admission, a confession that we're not as wise as we need to be. And that the wisdom we need is wisdom that comes from God.

One definition of fear of the Lord that I find helpful is this. It's simply a way of talking about one's attitude toward God, an attitude of submission, respect, dependence, and worship.

So that submission and that respect, that submitting to what God says, it's that loving of what's good and hating what's evil. It's a dependence, knowing that God's the one who provides what we need, and it's worship as well.

Fear of the Lord is recognizing God's worthiness and his holiness. That's what leads us to worship him, and that's what leads us to follow him. And so we can describe a God-fearing person in this way, someone who fears God, believes that God really does know what's best.

A person who fears God makes it their goal to stay far away from sin. They're not trying to get away with as much as possible. They're not trying to get as close to the line as they can without doing what's wrong.

[19:30] Instead, they're pursuing wholeheartedly what's good and what's right. And they do it because of their love for God, and also because their knowledge that even though we don't have fear of God's punishment, God disciplines his children.

People who fear the Lord are more concerned with what God thinks than what other people think. And so when there's peer pressure to do something that God doesn't approve of, the man or the woman, the boy or the girl who fears the Lord, will stand strong because their fear of the Lord is greater than the fear of man.

Now, if that's the fear of the Lord, second, we have to know, how does the fear of the Lord relate to wisdom? And this is a point that can be challenging for many of us because as we think about wisdom, we have to acknowledge, as we talk about skill in these various areas, there are people who don't know God, who don't fear the Lord, who seem to have that type of skill.

There are people who don't fear the Lord, who seem to know the right words to say at the right time.

There are people who don't fear the Lord, who seem to know how to manage money well.

And so how can we say that without the fear of the Lord, there's no wisdom? Well, I want you to think about it this way. Many years ago, I led a small group of high school guys at the church I was at at the time, and I had a running joke with them.

[20:53] I would tell them, you know, when you're out and about, when you're a young man, when you're dating, you have to make sure if you're dating a woman that she fears the Lord. And I would tell them, there's one way that you figure this out.

It's very important. The first date, you just ask them. You just straight up say, do you fear the Lord? Now, that was a joke because that's a terrible idea.

It's one of the last things you want to do on a first date. It's way too intense. It's not a helpful way of determining if someone actually loves God, right? You look at what they do and not what they say. And so it was a joke in between us, and they love to bring it up to me and ask me about it and mention it from time to time.

But there was a sense in which it wasn't a joke. I was making a serious point to them, which was this. It doesn't matter how beautiful or attractive someone is. It doesn't matter how skillful they are, what they do.

It doesn't matter how pleasant they are to be around. If they don't fear God, you're not dating them. They're not dating material. None of those other things are relevant in any way.

[21:58] Those things matter only if you know that this is someone who shares your love and commitment to God. The same is true for wisdom.

It doesn't matter how wise someone might appear to be. It doesn't matter what skill they might have in relationships with other people. It doesn't matter how good they are at managing money.

It doesn't matter if they have their anger under control and their emotional life is well-ordered. If they don't fear the Lord, they are not wise in the way that the Bible speaks about wisdom.

If you don't fear the Lord, everything else is irrelevant, right? You're not dating that person. If someone doesn't fear the Lord, everything else is irrelevant.

They are not wise. And this is for several reasons. Many of you know, some of you live in this area, that on the Broadmoor Bluffs part of town, on Broadmoor Bluffs Drive, there are houses that have had to be torn down.

[23 : 04] And the reason these houses had to be torn down is that they were standing on an area that was susceptible to landslides. And so while these houses might be beautiful from the outside, while they might have many wonderful elements to them, the foundation makes it a house not that's beautiful, but that's incredibly dangerous.

Having a landslide as the foundation of your house is a recipe for disaster. And so there might be many elements of a great house there. We might have granite countertops.

There might be gorgeous crown molding in the house. The paint might've been done in a way that's wonderful and impressive. There might be an amazing layout. It might be well furnished. We might enter that house and feel welcome and hospitality.

And yet if the foundation is falling apart, nothing else matters. That house is actually destructive. It's dangerous.

There might be some external elements of wisdom in someone's life. But if their foundation is not built on the fear of the Lord, on the love of God and obedience, that worship and respect and submission and dependence, there might be some appearance of wisdom, but there is no true wisdom there.

[24 : 25] They are actually headed to a place of destruction. And the same is true of wisdom. No matter how competent you are in life, outside of the fear of the Lord, you are not wise.

Wise. There were warnings as early as 1974 that this was not a smart area of town to be building houses in.

And yet builders continued, right? They continued in spite of the warnings, not paying them any heed. The warning here from the book of Proverbs is for us.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of the wisdom. And if that's not our foundation, then nothing else matters. Now, as you're listening, you may be thinking, okay, it sounds like I can live a great life now.

It's just that something in the future won't end well. There will be a time in this life where I can still use these principles that maybe are taught in the book of Proverbs. I can still figure out how to have good relationships.

[25 : 37] I can figure out how to be successful in business. And I can just disagree about whether the foundation is good or not. I don't fear the Lord, but I can still live a wise life. Well, it's actually worse than that.

It's not just that these houses had dangerous foundations that one day could lead to disaster and destruction. It's also that that disastrous foundation threatened the houses even while they were standing.

One family described their experience this way. Cracks began to appear in the house. Then as the foundation was sort of shifting, they got to a point where they couldn't open doors or windows.

In other words, the wrong foundation affected everything. It's not that there was this beautiful house with a bad foundation, but there was a house with a bad foundation, and so it was compromised in every way.

It was dangerous in every way. There was a hole that began to develop in the basement of this house. The same is true for us as well.

[26 : 38] If we don't fear God, but we fear man, the structure of our lives will be compromised in every way. And this can happen in a variety of situations.

If we don't fear God, but fear man, for example, there will come a time where we won't be able to stand for what's right. We won't be able, we won't be capable of choosing wisdom because we care more about what others think than what we know we need to do.

We'll also be vulnerable to the foolishness around us. I've highlighted that there are people who are not Christians who have some aspects of wisdom, and yet they live in a culture that's filled with foolishness.

And so we might see certain areas that reflect wisdom, but there's always going to be areas of incredible foolishness. For example, in our culture, you might be able to receive the advice you

need to be wise in certain ways about money.

And yet if you don't fear the Lord, you will receive only foolishness or mostly foolishness when it comes to sexuality. Even worse than that, maybe you have some appearance of wisdom in dealing with money, but you really won't be wise in your money.

[27 : 55] You'll have it for the wrong end. You won't be able to shake the anxiety that surrounds it. And you won't understand the balance that you can only learn from Jesus when he says, do not store up treasure on earth where moth and rust destroy, but store it up in heaven where they cannot destroy.

So the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It's the true foundation and it's the only foundation.

Without a true and right fear of God, the structures of our life will be compromised in every way. And so we must have wisdom.

We can only get it from this fear. Now, in the Old Testament, as I mentioned, that was written before the time that Jesus came.

And it's a book that tells us it comes in verse one from Solomon who we discussed earlier. But we as people who live after the writing of the New Testament, people who live after Jesus came, have the privilege of knowing even more than the original readers of this book did.

[29 : 12] We know Jesus' words in Matthew chapter 12, verse 42, where he tells us that the queen of the south will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it.

For she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. Jesus is referencing another story from the Old Testament about a time that a queen came to King Solomon to ask him all her questions.

That's the queen of the south that's referenced here. And he's saying, look, this woman traveled from the ends of the earth to hear from Solomon, who was the wisest man. I, Jesus, am even wiser and greater than Solomon.

And so how much more should you come to me for wisdom? We learn in John chapter one, for example, that the world is created through Jesus.

And so it shouldn't surprise us in any way that he has all wisdom. If wisdom is the skill of operating in this world, the one who made it should be the one who's able to tell us how to function well within it.

[30 : 16] He's also the one who enables and empowers our fear of the Lord. If fear of the Lord is not fear of punishment, then we need someone to take our punishment for us.

Jesus allows us to have that true fear of the Lord because he's the one who takes our punishment. And so we're able to have the fear of the Lord that looks like the relationship of a child to their parent, looking to them for wisdom, fearing their displeasure, knowing their punishment, but never having to worry about their relationship being broken.

We have that relationship with God, that potential, that opportunity to fear him through Jesus who allows us to be his brothers and to be adopted as God's sons and his daughters.

And so he makes it so that our fear cannot be of punishment, but of God as our true and great Father. Colossians chapter 2, verse 3, tells us, in Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

And then finally, in 1 Corinthians chapter 1, we're told that the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. That's a reference ultimately to Jesus' death.

[31 : 31] That, as one man has put it, there's a wisdom that the world doesn't understand in the fact that God uses an instrument of torture, the cross, as an instrument of salvation.

And so Jesus is our wisdom. He's the one who knows how this world operates. He's the one who gives us that wisdom. He's the one who allows us to have true fear of the Lord.

And he shows that wisdom for us and enables it and empowers it in his death for us on the cross. And so as we come to the book of Proverbs, as we come to this section, we need the fear of the Lord and we need to not be fools.

We don't despise wisdom and instruction. Instead, we confess our need for wisdom, for true wisdom. We confess that we're foolish, that we don't know everything that we need to know.

We confess our sin that without Jesus and his help and his forgiveness, we're unable not only to access wisdom but to want it. And so we come to Jesus letting him be the wise man who guides us, the one who gives us the fear of the Lord.

[32 : 38] And God's promise to us is that he gives it to those who ask. In James 1, verse 5, that we're told that those who ask for wisdom receive it. It says, if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given him.

And so we trust Jesus' wisdom and we ask him for wisdom. What is wisdom and how do we get it? Wisdom is skill in the art of living.

It's operating well within the boundaries that God's given us. It's also staying within the boundaries that God's given us. And we get it through the fear of the Lord, knowing that that is the and the only foundation for wisdom in our lives.

A fear that is we're given through and by Jesus Christ. Jesus tells us a story about being wise and foolish in Matthew chapter 7, verses 24 through 27.

Jesus says, everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on the rock.

[33 : 55] And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat against that house and it fell and great was the fall of it.

Proverbs chapter 30, verse 5, tells us that every word of God proves true. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

And so we come running to Jesus knowing that he is our wisdom, knowing that he's the one that we fear and he's the one who brings us to God. So we ask him for that knowing and trusting that he will provide it for us, growing us up in the wisdom that we so desperately need.

I invite you now to pray with me. Our Father in heaven, we thank you that you do give wisdom to those who ask. And so we come again asking you for it, that you'd give us the wisdom to know that we can't find life outside of you and you'd give us the fear that causes us to pursue that life from you.

We thank you that we don't have to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, but instead we trust and look to Jesus in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found.

[35 : 23] And so we ask these things in his name. Amen. As we end our time together, I'm going to leave you with a benediction. Remember that a benediction is a good word from God.

It's a word that's true in a world filled with words that are not true. It's tradition for the minister to hold up his hand to send out God's blessing on God's people and for God's people to hold out their hands to receive God's blessing.

So I invite you, even as we're separated physically, to hold out your hands now and hear God's good word over you from Numbers chapter 6. The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace now and forever. So go now in the grace and peace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Thank you all so much for joining us and we look forward to seeing you very soon. Amen.