

Proverbs 1:8-9

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning. 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. A special welcome if you're new with us. We'd love to have you go to our website at www.cmpca.net. And when you go there, there will be a pop-up immediately with a link to our online visitor card.

We'd ask that you fill that out and give us a chance to connect with you. Whether you're new or not, I'll remind you as I always do that while you can see me, I can't see you. And while we can see numbers, we often can't see names.

And so I encourage you to take a moment now to make a comment in the comment box at the bottom right of the Facebook video. You can say something as simple as good morning or here or great to be with everyone. And you can share where you're watching from and who you're watching with.

And that just gives us a small sense of being together, even as we're separated. I also want to let you know, there's a lot of discussion right now in our city and in our country about churches reopening.

[1 : 0 5] And so I know many of you have questions about that. We are talking about it as a leadership. We're meeting again as elders and deacons this Thursday. Our hope is that we can open very soon, but I can't give you a date or any details.

I certainly don't know what the date is yet. That's a discussion that we're going to have to have together. And I do know there's some rumors going around. And so if someone tells you the exact date that we're opening, just know that I am unaware of that date.

And so take that with a grain of salt. With that, I'll remind you that we are in the book of Proverbs this summer. We started last week there. And the book of Proverbs is a book in the Old Testament, which is the section of the Bible that was written before Jesus came.

And it's a book that contains Proverbs, which is a way of speaking that comes in short, pithy statements that contain a lot of truth. But as we mentioned last week, the book of Proverbs, of course, is not less than that, but it's also much more than that.

The book of Proverbs is a book about wisdom. And wisdom is skill in the art of living. Wisdom is how we navigate the area between right and wrong. God's given us clear boundaries in this world, but wisdom determines how we interact well within those boundaries.

[2 : 1 2] Wisdom is how we operate in the gray areas. It helps us navigate the path that God has given us. It also helps us to stay on the path that God has given us.

I'll remind you that one of my encouragements for you as we go through the book of Proverbs is to be reading it yourself. One Bible reading plan that's been used by many people in the church throughout the centuries is the Proverbs reading plan, which is where you read the chapter of Proverbs that corresponds with the day of the month.

There's 31 chapters in Proverbs, and there's at most 31 days in a month. And so you can always just pick up with what the chapter is for that day. Last week, we looked at verses one through seven, and we saw what wisdom was.

We also saw that it begins with the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is not a fear of punishment because we know from 1 John 4, 18, that perfect love casts out fear. Instead, the fear of the Lord, as we see it in Proverbs, is characterized by a love of what's good and a hatred of what's evil.

The fear of the Lord is also characterized by this rich humility, this desire to learn and to know God, this teachability, this longing for more knowledge about God and his ways.

[3 : 22] I gave you one definition from a man who puts it this way. The fear of the Lord is an attitude of submission, respect, dependence, and worship. Submission, respect, dependence, and worship.

This week, we're going to continue our introduction to the book of Proverbs, and we're going to be in verses eight and nine. Now, if you've listened to many preachers, you know, often things are very concise and clear in three points, and everything goes exactly together.

As we're looking at the introduction, though, we're going to talk about two things that are related, but a little bit separate. First, we're going to ask this question about what we do with the fact that the book of Proverbs is very masculine in its color.

We have this exhortation in verse eight to hear my son. So what do we do with the fact that it's primarily a relationship between a son and a father that's shown here? And then we're going to continue our discussion with the fear of the Lord and ask how do we use the fear of the Lord to receive wisdom and grow in wisdom?

If the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the beginning of knowledge, how do we proceed on that path once we've begun? And that's what we're going to see today from verses eight and nine. And so I invite you to turn with me to the book of Proverbs.

[4 : 29] You can open it up in a new browser on your computer, open it up on your phone, or you can turn in your physical Bible like I have. And as we come to it, remember that this is God's word. In 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. And so that's why we read it now, starting at verse eight. Hear, my son, your father's instruction and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our father in heaven, we thank you that you are a good father and that you give us instruction and teaching that you don't leave us to figure out this world on our own, but instead you walk with us for those who belong to you.

And so we ask simply this morning that you would do that, that you'd send your spirit, that you'd walk with us through these words and that you'd speak clearly to us, that we would be convicted by our need for your forgiveness and our need for repentance.

We'd also be encouraged by the grace that you offer through your son. And it's in his name, the mighty name of Jesus that we pray. Amen. Amen. During this time where we're under the threat of the coronavirus, many of you are probably familiar with the story of Captain Brett Crozier.

[6 : 07] Captain Brett was in charge of the aircraft carrier, Theodore Roosevelt, and there came a point where he decided he was going to write a letter to those who were in authority over him, above him, telling them about the situation occurring on his aircraft carrier where they were having an outbreak of the coronavirus.

And asking, pleading that something be done. And of course, whether he intended it to happen or not, this letter ended up becoming a public letter. So it was written to those individuals specifically and ended up being read by many, many people who perhaps it was not intended for.

Now, some people think he's a hero. Some people think he's a villain. Whichever side you fall on, that's not the point. The point is this. There are many times where there's a letter that's written.

There's something that's written to one person, but it ends up either on purpose or inadvertently being read by many people. The book of Proverbs takes that type of format in many places.

And we see that here in verse eight. It's a letter to a son. Hear, my son, your father's instruction. And we're going to see this throughout the book that there's going to be this masculine color and character to the book of Proverbs.

[7 : 16] So for example, we'll see the son warned about the woman who might tempt him. But we're not going to see women warned about men who might tempt them. And so that raises a question for thoughtful readers.

What do we do with that? Why is the book set up in that way? And how can women access this book when it has that color to it? I'm going to give you, as I say often, when I talk about things that are more controversial, I'm going to say something, but not everything.

And so there are a few things, a few hints that we have at the beginning here. First of all, there are things that are time-bound and things that are timeless. One thing that's time-bound here is that in the ancient Near East, there was a wisdom genre.

So the book of Proverbs is not alone in being a book about wisdom. There were other wisdom books during that time in the ancient Near East, and they would take a similar approach. They also would teach wisdom through the lens of a father talking to his son.

And so that reminds us, it highlights something for us about the character of God. God always speaks to his people in a way that meets them where they're at. God speaks to his people in a way that meets them where they're at.

[8 : 25] So it makes sense that God would reveal himself in his word in this way because it was a genre that people at that time were familiar with. And that's something that's time-bound.

We are not as familiar with that genre, and so it takes some skill for us to read the book of Proverbs that it might not have taken or might not have required as much thinking from someone at that time. I mentioned this last week, by the way, that that's part of wisdom from verses one through seven.

Verse six, wisdom is understanding a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. In other words, there's a wisdom to reading wisdom. And so that's something that's time-bound.

What's timeless, however, is that there is this sense that God has made the world in such a way that men have a special level of power and authority and responsibility.

And what the book of Proverbs does is it highlights what that is for. It reminds us that some of the privileges that men experience in this world are not at all for their comfort or their convenience.

[9 : 27] Instead, authority and power is to be used for other people. It's for sacrifice. It's for service. And it's for protection.

So this book is going to be a book that talks to men about those things. It's a book about accountability and responsibility. Some of you know if you've been tracking with our Friday emails that I've started a podcast on the book of Proverbs to accompany this.

And I had a wonderful conversation with a man named Zach Eswine. And you can find this on our website. And we talked about this very aspect. And he highlighted the fact that this book puts on display what's expected of people who are in authority.

In other words, it makes them even more accountable than they were before. And so we should not see this as a book that is somehow giving men privileges or giving them power in some way. Instead, it's recognizing there is sometimes a power there and there needs to be tremendous accountability.

This, by the way, ties into what happened with Captain Crozier, right? He writes this letter and it creates pressure. It creates increased accountability on the Navy. Same thing is true for Proverbs.

[10 : 36] We should be able to look at men in power and authority and say, and the book of Proverbs says you need to act in this way. You need to act in a way that preserves justice and life rather than does away with it.

You need to act in a way that lifts people up rather than tears them down. You need to act in a way that's responsible, that protects the dignity of other people. And so the book of Proverbs subverts what we might see in this world from powerful men.

It's also written in that way because this is writing to someone who's going to become a king and this male king is going to be someone who sets the tone for the nation. So it's incredibly important that he have wisdom.

It's not that it's not important that others don't, but we want that wisdom from him to be passed from the top all the way down. We see this highlighted, by the way, in Proverbs chapter 31.

Lemuel is the name of a king and Lemuel is given some instruction by his mom, by the way. We'll talk about that in a minute, about how to use wine. And she helps him understand that there's a different standard for someone in power when it comes to alcohol, a higher standard.

[11 : 40] So it's not that he has more privileges, it's that he has more responsibility. It's not that he has more power, but that he has more accountability. The other thing we need to highlight here is that in the world of wisdom, wise men learn from women.

In the world of wisdom, wise men learn from wisdom. We're going to see in verse 8 here, it's not just the father's instruction, but the mother's instruction. We're going to see in the book of Proverbs that wisdom is personified not as a man, but as a woman.

And we'll also see something interesting in Proverbs 31. I mentioned before, Proverbs 31, we see this king named King Lemuel who is being taught by his mother. Now, if you've been a Christian for a while, you're familiar with the Bible, you know that the book of Proverbs has this chapter at the very end that's talked about all the time and people will talk constantly about the Proverbs 31 woman and you might see books about the Proverbs 31 woman.

You might see articles about them, people talking about them and sometimes it feels overwhelming, right, because there's this woman who seems impossible to follow in terms of her example. That's fascinating because Proverbs 31 is not written to women.

It's actually written to men. And so, my hope is that when I'm old and gray and potentially wise, I will write a book called Becoming the Proverbs 31 man.

[13 : 05] And the Proverbs 31 man is going to have several chapters in it. Chapter 1, which is going to come from Proverbs 31 verses 1 through 9, the Proverbs 31 man listens carefully to his mom.

That's what King Lemuel does. He's instructed by his mom in wisdom. Then we're going to see in chapter 2, the Proverbs 31 man listens very carefully to his wife. We're told in Proverbs 31 verse 11 that the heart of the husband trusts in his wife.

And of course, if you trust in someone, you are of course going to want their counsel and their advice. You're going to give tremendous weight to that. That's only chapter 2 though. Chapter 3, the Proverbs 31 man is going to publicly praise his mom and his wife because that's again what we see in Proverbs 31 verse 28.

So as we come to the book of Proverbs and we have a book that's about a son and a father. It's important to remind ourselves and remember that women are part of the chorus teaching wisdom to these men and that wise men listen very carefully to the words of women.

Wise men listen very carefully to the words of women. They want to be Proverbs 31 men. Men who listen to their mom, listen to their wives and praise them publicly.

[14 : 30] In the midst of that there's still the predominant voice of the father here in the book of Proverbs and so that reminds us this is a family context much like the church where we want strong fathers and husbands leading their families and teaching them wisdom.

Finally, I'll point out to you this is a book for everyone as we're reminded in verses 4 through 6 from last week. It's for the simple. It's for the wise. It's for the youth.

And so being wise in wisdom is reminding us that it's for everyone, right? This is written to a son but it's an adolescent male. So even if we're men very few of us are adolescent males. And if we're an adolescent male very few of us probably none of us are preparing to become the king of Israel.

And so all of us have to take a reading strategy where we look at the original audience and we figure out what's meant for us. Now this might sound like a bunny trail at the beginning but it's going to be important for us as we go along the book of Proverbs because we're going to encounter this type of issue over and over and so we will just talk about it as we go along.

Again, I haven't said everything here today but I've said something. It's tempting in our culture to hear this story about the relationship between men and women as what we would call in game theory a zero-sum game which means that whenever one wins the other loses.

[15 : 47] But in fact the vision that the Bible gives us is very different. It's a cooperative effort that men and women are working together cooperating side by side building each other up and using their strengths to help each other.

Of course that's a perfect segue because we've talked about hear my son and now we're going to look at what the son hears. Verse 8 Your father's instruction and your mother's teaching. So both the mother and the father are working together.

The Bible sees the wisdom as something that both of them know and both of them teach. By the way as this is a genre from the ancient Near East as often happens with the Bible it uses a genre and it subverts it.

And so the voice of the mother is going to appear here in the book of Proverbs more than it does in the secular wisdom literature that surrounds it as the time. It's unusual. It's surprising here should be for those reading it that the mother is mentioned.

However as people who know God's heart for his people it should not surprise us at all. God sees the family as this school of wisdom and these words here we see instruction and teaching.

[16 : 54] There's a school aspect to those words and an aspect of talking and instructing and there's also a boot camp aspect that's captured by these words. There's an aspect of discipline and training and punishment.

And so the Christian home that we see here is a school for wisdom. It's a place where wisdom is taught and acted out not just in words but in discipline and training.

And so the initial application for us is this. Remember we're asking this question how do we use the fear of the Lord to receive and grow in wisdom? And the first way is this.

Fathers and mothers are diligently training their children in wisdom. They're instructing them. They're talking with them about the ways of the Lord. They're giving them punishment when necessary not to be vindictive because they love their children and they want them to walk in the ways that are right.

Proverbs 13 verse 24 tells us this. Whoever spares the rod hates his son but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him. And so this discipline is not for the convenience or the comfort of the parents.

[17 : 59] Instead it's doing what's hard for the sake of their children. Like the Proverbs is saying something very stark here.

if you won't discipline your children if you won't teach them wisdom you actually hate them. Because the one who wants what's good and right for their kids wants them to learn lessons when they're easy to learn rather than learn them when they're hard.

Imagine this. Which one is easier? Is it easier to receive punishment when you're eight years old for stealing five dollars? Or is it easier to receive punishment when you're 35 years old or 65 years old for stealing five million dollars?

The answer's obvious, right? It's much better that you learn that lesson in a small way when you're young than have to learn in a large way when you're old.

And so that's part of the reason there's this emphasis for the youth here in the book of Proverbs. Deuteronomy chapter 6 tells us about this. There's this instruction and wisdom that happens in the Christian family that's about all of life and it's in all of life.

[19 : 09] Deuteronomy chapter 6 verse 7 tells us this. You shall teach them diligently to your children talking about God's ways and shall talk of them when you sit in the house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

Wisdom is something that's trained constantly by mothers, by fathers to their children. the command here is not to the parents.

That's what's implied here but to the son. It's the child here that's supposed to hear the father's instruction and not forsake the mother's teaching. And these are not just cognitive words.

These are words of obedience. This hear word includes, it implies, that it's going to be followed by obeying what's heard. And so it's not just that parents are responsible to their children but children are responsible to their parents.

And so our question would be this. Do you fear the Lord, kids? Would we know that you fear the Lord based on the way you respond when your parents teach you and correct you?

[20 : 11] Are you willing to hear your father's instruction and not forsake your mother's teaching? There's a reward here by the way. It says in verse 9 for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

Now there's many ideas about what's being referred to here. I would say simply these are symbols of prosperity and life. Do you want to have a life that's well lived?

Do you want to prosper in life? Do you want to succeed? Do you want to take hold of what Jesus offers us in the gospel?

If you do the call for you is obedience and obedience to your parents. Proverbs chapter 20 verse 11 tells us this even a child makes himself known by his acts by whether his conduct is pure and upright.

Do you want to learn in small ways so you don't have to learn in big ways? Do you want to learn when the punishment and the stakes are low? Or do you want to learn when they're high?

[21 : 21] Of course a wise person wants to learn when they're low. A wise child wants to learn and gain as much from their parents as they can. If you go on post to Fort Carson or really any of the other bases here in town and you go into one of the gyms there you'll probably see a sign that says something like this.

The more you sweat in training the less you bleed in battle. the more you sweat in training the less you bleed in battle.

The Christian home is a place of training and when you go out into the world when you leave your parents house you will be in the real battlefield and so choose the sweat rather than the blood.

Choose to learn now when the stakes are low rather than later when the stakes are high. Don't reject and become bitter at your parents discipline and instruction.

Instead embracing it knowing that it's the way to life. That is the way you will have a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. And so how is it that we use the fear of the Lord to receive and take hold of wisdom?

[22 : 40] Well we do it as we embrace discipline and instruction. Parents giving it and forming it in their children. Children honoring it and receiving it from their parents. As I mentioned earlier though we need to be wise in reading Proverbs and so we don't take this rigidly as just being between parents and children.

There's a wisdom to knowing how to read wisdom literature. That's why it says in Proverbs chapter 1 verse 2 the goal here is to understand words of insight. So how do we understand these words of insight if we're not parents?

Maybe we're not children. Maybe we have children but they're out of the home. Maybe you're single. Well this book of course isn't a public letter right?

It's written for many people to listen in and so there's a broader principle that all of us can take from this and it's this. wisdom is a community project, a group project, a family project.

Wisdom is something we work on together and wisdom is also something that some people have more of than other people. Our expectation is that older people hopefully have more wisdom than younger people.

[23 : 58] People with more life experience or certain types of experiences have more wisdom than those who have not had those experiences. And so the broader principle is this, listen to the wise. Receive correction and instruction.

This is the vision that the Bible gives us not just for the nuclear family but also for our church family. We see in Titus chapter 2 that it's older women teaching younger women. It's younger men who are supposed to be subject to the elders also in Titus 2 and in 1 Peter chapter 5.

There's this dynamic where the less wise are submitting themselves to the more wise. There's this recognition that all of us in life are in places where we don't have all the wisdom we need but God's given us a community that surrounds us and he tells us to embrace the wisdom that's there.

Proverbs chapter 13 verse 20 tells us that he who walks with the wise grows wise. And so if we want to embrace wisdom, if we want to grow in wisdom, if we want the type of knowledge that comes from the fear of the Lord, we need to find wise people.

And submit to their instruction and their discipline. Wisdom is not connected to the size of your library.

[25 : 17] Wisdom is instead connected to the size of your humility. Wisdom is not connected to the size of your library.

Wisdom is not connected to the length of your resume. Wisdom is directly connected to how much humility you have.

There's one man who says this and he puts it very starkly. Hearts that are not humble are hearts that are not really connected with the Lord.

One cannot know God and hold on to a proud heart at the same time. Hearts that are humble are not humble are hearts that are not really connected with the Lord.

One cannot know God and hold on to a proud heart at the same time. We cannot believe that we know what we need to know and also grow in wisdom.

[26 : 24] it's a rich and deep humility that allows us to embrace wisdom and grow in it. When I was in seminary and I took a class on Proverbs I had a wise instructor and he understood this concept.

He knew that it wasn't going to be helpful for his class just to receive words from him about the book of Proverbs and so he gave an optional assignment to students a challenge and it was this. Go home and since humility is the beginning of wisdom ask your spouse if you're married or ask a good friend if you're not how good am I at receiving correction?

How free do you as my spouse feel in giving me feedback? And when you do how do I respond to that? In other words am I a humble person and am I willing to grow in wisdom?

That would be a good challenge for us. Kids it would be a good challenge for you. Ask your parents how wise am I? What can I do to be better at responding and receiving correction?

Over the coming weeks he would ask students to report in. Hey who has completed the project and what did you hear? And there were some brave souls who undertook it. Some of them reported things that were somewhat encouraging and some of them had heard things that were very very hard.

[27 : 52] these are people who are training in a seminary to know God challenged to see how much they actually knew God not by a test not by a paper or an exam but by the demonstration of humility in their lives and their relationships.

relationships. During my time in the church I have met very many people who are eager to talk and have a lot to say.

I have met very few people who are eager to listen and have a lot of questions to ask. I have met very many people who are eager to talk and have a lot to say.

I have met fewer people who are eager to listen and have a lot of questions. One of those is the way of the wise and one is the way of the fool.

James chapter 1 verses 19 through 20 tells us to be quick to listen and slow to speak. And yet so many of us are quick to speak and slow to listen.

[29 : 18] Remember that the fear of the Lord is an attitude of submission, respect, dependence, and worship. It's about humility, obedience, and submission. Fear of the Lord reveals itself in how we interact with others.

How much wisdom we have reveals itself in how we interact with others? So are we open to correction? How do you respond when you receive feedback that's negative?

Proverbs chapter 27 verse 6 tells us this, faithful are the wounds of a friend, profuse are the kisses of an enemy. When you receive a wound from a friend, do you consider it faithful?

Or would you rather receive kisses from an enemy? Do we welcome the input of those who are wiser and older? Do we seek it out? Or do we think we already have all the answers?

Do we resent feedback when we receive it, or do we welcome it? Do we apply it? Do we learn and move forward with the lessons that God's given us? Do we choose growing and learning, over the need to be right?

[30 : 37] Do we choose growing and learning over the need to be right? The gospel, the very entry to the gospel, the fear of the Lord, means admitting that we're not right. It's possible to be able to explain the doctrine of justification in detail, the doctrine that tells us that God has paid our sins and we're right with him, and at the same time still be desperate.

for other people to believe that we've got it all together. It's easy to know the doctrine of justification in detail and be able to explain it, and still be desperate for other people to believe that we have it all together.

And yet true wisdom here is characterized by humility. It's someone who's open to instruction and teaching. Our Lord Jesus tells us the same thing as well.

We saw last week from Matthew chapter 12, verse 42, that Jesus tells us he's greater than Solomon. Solomon, who's the author of this book of wisdom. Solomon knew wisdom.

Jesus is wisdom. He's an even greater wisdom teacher than the author of this book, and he himself tells us about what it takes to receive the kingdom. him. In Matthew chapter 18, it tells us a story about the disciples coming to Jesus, and they say, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

[32 : 06] It says, Jesus called to him a child. He put him in the midst of them and said, truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Do you want to enter the kingdom of heaven? Do you want to be what Jesus calls the greatest here?

Do you want to be wise? And you have to humble yourself like a child. You have to be characterized by dependence, obedience, and submission.

Jesus then goes on to tell us in Matthew chapter 19, we hear that children are brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.

And he laid his hands on them and went away. Our Lord Jesus, the great teacher of wisdom, tells us even more than what we see here in Proverbs chapter 1 verses 8 and 9, which is that if we want to receive the kingdom, if we want to belong to him as his children, then we must become like children.

[33 : 28] We have to know and understand not how much we've mastered, but how much we have to learn. we don't protect believing that we have to convince other people that we've arrived, but instead we confess that we haven't arrived.

In fact, that's the heart of the gospel, right? We cannot call ourselves a Christian if we've not confessed our desperate need of God's grace and his wisdom. The gospel is not for people who get it right, who are perfect.

The gospel is for people who don't get it right and aren't perfect and are humble enough to admit it and seek to grow. They're humble enough and secure enough in Jesus and his love to be able to say, I need to learn and I'm not right.

It's enough to admit our need for God's grace and to run to it. Jesus accepts us as we are and as we saw, even with the genre of this book, he meets us where we are.

And so the gospel requires us to be honest, about where we are, requires us to be humble. Wisdom is only for the humble.

[34 : 43] As Jesus tells us in Matthew chapter 18 and 19, his kingdom is only for the humble as well. So how is it that we use the fear of the Lord to receive and grow in wisdom?

Well, we have to be people who are characterized by humility as well. There's a family wisdom. We're learning from one another. There's a rich humility following after Jesus as a family because we've been adopted by him into his family.

Jesus is the one who empowers us to be humble and he's the one who provides us with the community that surrounds us that actually has the true wisdom that he's given us through others and he's given us through his word.

And so he's the one who provides the wisdom that comes from humility. The wisdom that comes from those around us and the wisdom that comes to us through his instruction and his word.

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

[35 : 59] And so it's with that hope and that promise that we come to him in humility looking to grow in wisdom. And so I invite you to come and pray with me now that we would be those kinds of people humble people coming to Jesus admitting our need and looking for his wisdom and his forgiveness.

So please pray with me. Our Father in heaven we thank you that you've given us your word we thank you that you use it to pierce through bone and marrow you use it to pierce our hearts to convict us of our need for you and to show us the hope that you offer us in Jesus.

We ask that you'd continue to do this now that for those of us who are proud you would give us hearts of humility. For those of us who are bitter towards instruction you would make us open to it.

Most of all we ask that you would make Jesus more beautiful and glorious to us that we would see the security the confidence that we have in him and so we'd be able to say Jesus is perfect and so I'm free to admit I'm not but Jesus is also loving and so he's going to walk with me to grow.

We ask these things praising you that we don't have to earn them by our wisdom but we can ask them to you in our foolishness coming to you in humility knowing that Jesus will cover them and so we ask it in his name amen.

[37 : 25] We're going to end our time together with a benediction and I remind you that a benediction is a good word from God. It's a word that's true in the midst of 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. And so hear now 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.