

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (January 29) – Psalm 146–150

Each of these psalms begin with the Hebrew word, “Hallelujah,” which means, “Praise the Lord!” Praise the Lord, for He is greater than all earthly rulers. He is the good King who executes justice for the lowly (Psalm 146). He is the all-powerful Lord of creation who works all things for your good! (Psalm 147). He is the Lord of heaven as well as earth! From the creeping things to the angels, all are His creation. (Psalm 148). The final two Psalms are joyous songs of procession. Psalm 149 mentions a “new song.” The Old Song was the Song of Moses which celebrated God bringing his people through the Red Sea on dry ground and destroying the hosts of Pharaoh. The New Song declares God’s final redemptive work on behalf of his people; namely, the victory over sin, death, and the devil won by Christ’s all atoning sacrifice on the cross (see Rev. 5:8–9). In Revelation we see the union of heaven and earth. Men and angels sing together in praise of the Lamb, “For you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God” (Revelation 5:9).

Tuesday (January 30) – Proverbs 1, 2

The central theme of the Book of Proverbs is the teaching of the Two Ways: the way of wisdom which leads to life versus the way of foolishness which leads to death. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10). True biblical wisdom begins with fear of the Lord. “We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things” (Small Catechism, 1st Commandment). This pious fear of the Lord which the Holy Spirit teaches in Proverbs is not servile fear. Servile fear is walking on eggshells in terror that God will squash us like bugs. Servile fear leads to despair. The pious fear commended to us in Proverbs is filial fear. Filial fear is the fear a son has of his father. It is the pious fear of God’s baptized children. Filial fear acknowledges that we will all one day stand before the judgment seat of God to give an account of our deeds. We ought to fear God rather than men. Men can only kill the body while God can destroy both body and soul in hell (Matthew 10:28). At the same time, filial fear acknowledges that salvation belongs to the Lord (Jonah 2:9). We place our trust only in our Lord Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the wisdom of God made flesh, by whose blood we have been redeemed and in whose name we have life.

Wednesday (January 31) – Proverbs 3, 4

In the Small Catechism, Luther prefaces each chief part by providing instructions for how the catechism is to be used: “As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.” Our heavenly Father established fatherhood for the purpose of training up children to fear, love, and trust the Lord. “Young people need and must have teachers and rulers who will exhort, warn, rebuke, and chastise them, who will hold them constantly to the fear of God and to his commandments in order to ward off the devil, the world, and the flesh. This, then, is what Solomon does abundantly and with all diligence in this book. He puts his

teaching into proverbs, so that it can be grasped the more easily and kept the more readily. Anyone who intends to become righteous might well take this as a handbook or prayer book for his daily use, read it often, and ponder his own life in it” (Martin Luther). Christ Jesus our Lord is wisdom personified. The proverbs are never merely morality lessons. The Wisdom of God is always referring to the object of our faith, the One who is our righteousness, the Lord Jesus and His atoning sacrifice for all sin.

Thursday (February 1) – Proverbs 5, 6

In these chapters the Two Ways are described in more detail. Especially in chapter 5, note how seductively the Way of Death presents itself. That which is evil and leads to death looks attractive. Sins against the sixth commandment (of a sexual nature) are deadly. In these chapters we are shown what sin looks like, why we sin, and where sin leads. That which is evil appears good. That which is good appears mundane or even evil. This is why Christians never stop needing God’s law, which shows us the horrific consequence of sin. While God’s Law is good and wise, it offers no hope to be free from sin or to escape its horrible wage of death. Who can deliver me from this body of death? Only our Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood covers all sin and whose Spirit regenerates us through His Word and Sacraments.

Friday (February 2) – Proverbs 7, 8

In Proverbs Wisdom is personified (i.e. 1:20–33; 3:14–20; etc.). As we read Proverbs in light of Christ, one cannot help but see the connections between Wisdom and the Word. St. Paul says it this way, “We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:23–24).

Saturday (February 3) – Proverbs 9, 10

Wisdom is not some lofty goal, only to be achieved by a few who devote their lives to scholarly knowledge. Wisdom has built a house, prepared a feast, and sent out messengers with the call to come and eat (9:4–6). Remember Jesus’ parables about banquets and feasts (Matthew 22:1–22; Luke 14:12–24). True wisdom is to fear, love, and trust in God. True wisdom is grasped by those who hear the Word of God and have faith worked in their hearts. Godly wisdom is a gift which even infants receive in the waters of Holy Baptism.

Sunday (February 4) – Proverbs 11

As you read these proverbs of Solomon in chapters 10 and 11, look for how each of these corresponds to the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are a summary of God’s wisdom; his will for all mankind. Sin is our failure to live according to that will. This is why, as Proverbs continually reminds us, sin is utter foolishness. Also remember how God became man in Christ Jesus and kept the whole law perfectly. He has given you His perfect life (His life lived according to the Way of Life in every step) in the waters of Holy Baptism. In these chapters see the beauty of the robe of righteousness with which you have been clothed!