



MY son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. 2 Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. 3 Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. 4 Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman: 5 That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. (Prov 7:1-5)

I learned early in life to have a very high regard for the distaff, and womanhood in general. In my mind, true womanhood remains an exalted pedestal above the common plane of mankind. Womanhood is endowed with a heart of compassion, kindness, and charity that gives it a great power exceeding all others since love is its crown, and sacrifice its shield of honor. Even most names of women, many of which are biblical, convey a softness and beauty that is a comfort to hear – Lois, Elizabeth, Deborah, Hannah, Bathsheba, Esther, Eve, Martha, Mary, Drusilla, Lydia, Salome, and, yes, Sophia. But wait, you say! There is no such woman mentioned in the Bible! Yes, there is! SOPHIA (translated from the Greek transliteration) is the name of Wisdom which is almost always given a feminine nature in Scripture. In the introductory passage, we are counseled even to call wisdom our sister. (Verse 4).

See what gentle reference Solomon makes to Wisdom in the next chapter of Proverbs: 1 Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? 2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. 3 She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. 4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. 5 O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. 6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. 7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. 8 All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them. (Prov 8:1-8)

Wisdom is the best Counselor of the conscience. How often we hear her voice call at the gates of strange cities to which our paths have ventured. Cities are centers of gathering of every kind of person – both good and bad. It will not be possible to have a city of many thousands without some evil hearts therein. So we are warned at the entry gates to BEWARE of the seducer and the robber before entry. We have all heard that warning whether we heeded it or not; but we disregard the voice of Wisdom at our own

peril. Wisdom is better than a mother for a mother will always advise what she deems best for her children, but a mother's counsel is not infallible – the Counsel of Wisdom is indeed infallible.

The marginal notes of the Geneva Bible state: *Solomon declares that man is the cause of his own perdition and that he cannot pretend ignorance, for God calls all men by his word and his works to follow virtue and flee from vice.* Man is one creature that is specially inclined to lie to himself – and to believe his own lie! Shakespeare well spoke when he counseled: *This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.* Polonius, Tragedy of Hamlet, Scene III. Above all, indeed! Why is this quote profoundly true? I believe it is because we look upon our own sins with the eyes of a mole, but upon the sins of others with the eyes of an eagle. We justify every fault and shortcoming of our own doing, but magnify the shortcomings of others regardless how minor. We LIE to ourselves, do we not!

The Bible often uses the technique of personification when making reference to strong points of ideas such as WISDOM; however, wisdom is not a person, but descriptive of Godly qualities and, certainly, descriptive of the nature of our Lord. If any single Person could be said to perfectly embody the qualities and properties of WISDOM, it would be our Lord Jesus Christ. He counseled only with wisdom.

So why is the feminine noun often used to describe wisdom? It may be due to the convincing and pleading nature of the feminine over the masculine. Men often depend upon their brute strength or intimidation to convince others to do or think in a certain way; but a woman has a more gentle approach in convincing through wise counsel rather than force of personality. In the end, only reasoned wisdom matters.

What is the source of wisdom? It is given by the Lord just as He gave to Solomon because he was a seeker of wisdom. *Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you.* Matthew 7:7 With what disposition is one motivated to ask, to seek, to knock at the door of wisdom? An interesting reference is made in the Psalms in answer to that inquiry: *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that DO HIS COMMANDMENTS: his praise endureth for ever.* (Psalm 111:10) A good understanding is begotten of wisdom, and that comes – not in merely knowing God's Commandments, but in DOING THEM!

The fabric that gives WISDOM strength and value is TRUTH. Wisdom is truth personified! *6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. 7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. 8 All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them. 9 They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. 10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. 11 For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.* (Prov 8:6-11)

The leading characteristic found, *in toto*, pervading the nature of the Triune God is WISDOM. The Wisdom of God is eternal and has existed with Him from Eternity Past to Eternity Future. *22 The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth.* (Prov 8:22-29)

Wisdom was the treasure of God's eye when He created mankind, and was the blueprint for Creation: *30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.* (Prov 8:30-31) Wisdom delights in the Counsel she provides to the sons of men – when they hear and follow that still, small voice.

The Straight and Narrow Way that leads up to life is paved by the stones, and girded by the handrails, of wisdom: *32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. 36 But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.* (Prov 8:32-36) Clearly and simply stated, sin is the rejection of wisdom. It may feel good at the moment; it may enrich our bank accounts; it may boost our prideful yearnings; it may please our carnal desires; but it is sin if it contravenes the counsel of wisdom. There is no such thing as 'get-rich-quick' schemes. The so-called 'name-it-and-claim-it' gospel is a delusion and a deception of the most egregious kind since it rejects Godly wisdom. The slogan of a popular false prophet of our day is God has something good in store for you today! Really! God may, indeed, have something good in store for us, but He may also allow persecutions and tribulations of the most severe nature as well to show forth His glory. It would be interesting to post the slogans of Joel Osteen beneath the horrid photos of Christians of the Middle East being beheaded for their refusal to deny their Lord. Such unwise and deceitful preaching renders those so deceived defenseless when trials and persecution do appear.

Following the wisdom of God does not make the believer immune from all of the atrocities committed against humanity, but it does arm him to be a witness and a testimony of the strength of His Lord who also bore His cross to a cruel and tortuous death outside the gates of Jerusalem. It empowers us to face our trials.

Wisdom takes the long view, not the view of instant gratification. It may be encouraging and enlightening to read the lives of the Early Fathers of the Church, but how much more profitable to drink from the overflowing Fountain from which those men, too, drank – the Holy Bible! If we will profit most, we will study both, but the Holy Bible is the reigning Monarch and Foundation of Wisdom.

AND *further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh. 13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* (Eccl 12:12-14)