NMBC Sunday 12th January 2025

**Readings:**

* 1st Reading**: Proverbs 2:1-22**
* 2nd Reading**: Matthew 7:7-8, 13-14, 24-27**

**Ask, Seek, Knock**

***7****“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.****8****For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.*

**The Narrow and Wide Gates**

***13****“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.****14****But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*

**The Wise and Foolish Builders**

***24****“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.****25****The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.****26****But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.****27****The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”*

**MESSAGE OUTLINE**

Prov 2:1-22 A Path to Take **The search for wisdom, its source and its results.**

**THE SEARCH FOR WISDOM:** STORE UP, APPLY YOUR HEART, CALL OUT (verses 1-5)

*My son,****if*** *you accept my words and store up my commands within you,* ***2****turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—****3****indeed,* ***if*** *you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,* ***4****and* ***if*** *you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,* ***5then*** *you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.*

Notice the cause and effect*“if … then …”*

Notice also the exhortations to action: “*accept … store up …* *turn your ear … apply your heart … call out … cry aloud … look for … search for …”*

**THE SOURCE OF WISDOM:** GOD AND HIS WORD

***6****For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.* ***7****He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,* ***8****for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.*

James 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:15-17**,** Psalm 119:97-104

**THE RESULTS OF WISDOM:** AN INTERNAL COMPASS

***9Then*** *you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path.* ***10****For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.****11****Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.*

Wisdom gives us an internal moral compass verses 9-11

James 3:17 The wisdom from above (and Luke 6:45)

**THE RESULTS OF WISDOM:** CHOOSING THE RIGHT COMPANIONS

***12Wisdom will save you from*** *the ways of* ***wicked men****, from men whose words are perverse,****13****who have left the straight paths to walk in dark ways,****14****who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil,****15****whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways.*

***16Wisdom will save you also from*** *the adulterous woman, from* ***the wayward woman*** *with her seductive words,****17****who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God.[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs%202&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16451a)*]****18****S:urely her house leads down to death and her paths to the spirits of the dead.****19****None who go to her return or attain the paths of life.*

Wisdom protects us from unhelpful and potentially dangerous relationships (with the wrong sort of men and the wrong sort of women). Verses 12-19

**THE RESULTS OF WISDOM:** THE PATH LEADS TO LONG TERM CONSEQUENCES

***20****Thus you will walk in the ways of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous.* ***21****For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it;* ***22****but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the unfaithful will be torn from it.*

Compare this with Jesus’ story of the wise and foolish builders; there are serious long-term consequences of the choices we make.

**POSSIBLE AREAS OF APPLICATION?**

* *accept my words and store up my commands within you* **Scripture Memory**
* *turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding* **Listening and reflecting**
* *call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,* **Prayer**
* *look for (understanding) as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure* **Bible Study**