

The Contrasting Appeals of Two Women – Lady Wisdom and Woman Folly: Choose Wisdom (Proverbs 8-9)

Proverbs: The Wisdom of the God as the Way of Life
Zionsville Fellowship | September 21, 2025 | Edgar Momoh

Introduction:

If you are new here, we are working through the book of Proverbs. Today, we will cover chapters 8 and 9, which are the last two chapters in the first section of the Proverb series.

We learned from the beginning that the entire book is divided into six main sections 1. Beginning wisdom, 2. elementary wisdom, 3. Intermediate wisdom, 4. Vocational wisdom, 5. Advanced wisdom, 6. Applied wisdom.

As I mentioned earlier, chapters 8 and 9 are the last two chapters of the first section, which consists of appeals from a father to a son to seek, receive, and treasure wisdom.

In chapter 7, we saw Solomon's passionate plea to his sons or pupils to avoid the path that leads to the adulteress woman's house by paying attention to his teachings and embracing wisdom like a sister. Unlike Chapters 8 & 9, where Wisdom is spoken of as a person, Solomon referred to a real person in Chapter 7—someone who possessed all the characteristics of a seductive personality.

Someone whom his sons may encounter in the neighborhood or down the road. Or in our case, perhaps a seductive employer/employee or coworker. A first glance at an inappropriate image online that develops into an addiction and progresses into a physical ensnarement in the arms of an adulteress woman.

However, in chapter 8, Solomon contrasts the call of the adulteress woman in the previous chapter with the voice of another woman. But this time, it is the voice of Lady Wisdom, who is depicted as a person. Solomon clearly contrasts the calls of these two women to create tension in his audience's minds, urging them to consider the consequences. Whereas heeding the voice of the adulterous woman ends in taking possession of the body and soul of a youth, Lady Wisdom offers real and lasting pleasure to all who would heed her call, choose her ways, pursue her values, and keep her lessons.

We came across her in chapter 1:20-33, where she made her appeals in the public square to all men to listen to her and get life. We will reencounter her in chapter 9, where we will see contrasting invitations between her and another woman, Folly. The rivalry between her and the adulteress woman in chapter 7 is somewhat heightened because both ladies not only directly target the same audience with their invitation but also share certain similarities.

However, the outcomes of those who would RSVP to their invitations are grossly different in the end. Chapter 8:34-35 gives an insight into what those who accept the

invitation of Lady Wisdom stand to benefit. It says, ***"Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord"***.

Contrastingly, chapter 9:16-18 gives us a chilling outcome for those who accept the Woman Folly's invitation. It says,

16 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"

And to him who lacks sense she says,

17 "Stolen water is sweet,

and bread eaten in secret is pleasant."

18 But he does not know that the dead are there,

that her guests are in the depths of Sheol."

This provides us with an overview of the text, which we will read in portions as we walk through it. I hope to convince you this morning that the main point of the passage is 'Fruitful life awaits those who pay heed to Wisdom's call, but destruction will befall those who pay heed to Folly.'

Let's pray!

The text is divided into three movements - Proverbs 8 and 9

THE CONTRASTING APPEALS OF TWO WOMEN – LADY WISDOM & WOMAN FOLLY: CHOOSE WISDOM

- I. Wisdom's Calls (8:1-11)
 - i. Introductory questions (vv. 1-3)

The very first verse of this text is interesting and demands our attention. You would notice that it is phrased rhetorically. It says, ***"Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice?" (v.1)***. To put this into context, we would need to refer back to when we first encountered Wisdom's call in verses 1:20-21, that says, ***"Wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the markets she raises her voice; at the head of the noisy streets, she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates, she speaks..."***

You notice a couple of similarities between these two references. In both references, Wisdom is calling out or crying out. Then she raises her voice. But in the opening verses of chapter 8, she introduces her speech with a rhetorical question. She uses this device to have a positive effect on her audience, encouraging them to pay attention to her voice. It also invited them to distinguish her voice from the cacophony of other voices. For that act itself is a matter of discretion.

I can fully identify with this kind of rhetorical device, growing up in Africa. You see, African mothers sometimes spoke in that manner. They gave warnings only once. The

next time it came in the form of rhetoric or sarcasm. For example, your mother will call you in the middle of your play once. The next time, you will not only hear your name but also hear the little rhetorical phrase, “didn’t you hear me calling you?”.

And boy, every child knew what that meant. First, it implied that you should always learn to distinguish between your mother’s voice and the surrounding competing voices, no matter how much you were delighted in the activity you were engaged in. It also implied that it was grossly disrespectful to ignore your mother’s voice. So, Solomon used this device effectively to draw his audience’s attention to what Lady Wisdom was about to say, given that she had already raised her voice about this in chapter one. This is akin to what Jesus said about those whom the Father had given to him in John 10:27, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

ii. Audience of the message (vv. 4-5)

You may have also noticed that Wisdom’s earlier call went out in every direction. To those in the marketplaces, on the noisy streets, and at the entrance of the city gates. In other words, Solomon intended to make Wisdom’s appeal available to everyone. This truth was not meant only for his sons or pupils under him. Instead it was a universal truth for everyone, just as Titus 2:11-14, reminds us that ***“11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”***

Her target audience was all mankind, specifically those who were still undecided about gaining wisdom (aka the simple). To them, he says, “Gain prudence.” To the foolish or those with an outright rebellious heart, he says, “Gain understanding.”

I love the way one author reflects on it. He says, this is indicative of the fact that God’s truth or wisdom is available to everyone, even to the vilest of them all. And it is active in seeking us – so that our own search, earnest as it has to be, is a response, not an uncertain quest. (Kidner, Derek)

iii. Worthiness of the message (vv. 6-9)

At this point, Wisdom calls attention to the worthiness of her speech. She says, “Listen.” Haven’t you been in a serious conversation with someone, and in mid-sentence, they throw in this imperative, “listen” or “hear”? It actually implies that what the speaker is about to say is very important. Nigerians are known for being a people who speak with gestures and great emphasis. And I love the way they gesture to the word ‘listen’. They pull on both of their earlobes as they say, “Listen and listen to me well.”

I believe Wisdom was not too far from that kind of posture when she says in verse 6, “Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is true”. (NIV) It will

do us good as well if we pay attention and hear what Lady Wisdom is about to teach us because she says, “My mouth will utter truth.” In other words, truth for life. And blessed is the man who listens to my instructions, for they will have life.

Wisdom wanted to make her speech very comprehensible for everyone to hear and understand, as it was of eternal value. It was as if Yahweh himself was addressing his people just like he addressed them when they were about to enter the Promised Land in Deuteronomy 6:1-4.

“Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules^[a]—that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, ²that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son’s son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. ³ Hear [listen] therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

In a nutshell, the Lord was speaking to His people through Moses, to lay hold of Wisdom. And the way to do that was to fear the Lord, you and your sons, by keeping his commands. And what would be the reward? Your “days will be long.” Don’t we see that in this text as well? Wisdom begets a fruitful life. It is echoed in 8:34, ***“For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord.”***

However, listening was not enough; a discerning disposition and an active search for knowledge must accompany it. And from this moral posture, Lady Wisdom’s speech is perceived as clear, attractive, and virtuous, worthy of one’s attention and reception (Ansberry, Christopher B.).

iv. Significance of the message (vv. 10-11)

If verses 6-10 draw our attention to Wisdom’s speech, verses 10-11 remind us of the significance of the speech. Part of which has already been alluded to in the previous sub-topic. But Wisdom is more specific here about her imperative to “choose”. In other words, I am not only recommending a trustworthy speech to you. Instead, I am nudging you to “choose” it. In fact, she purposefully used an economic term here to draw a comparison between the surpassing significance of wealth and the values she has to offer. If Wisdom’s words are trustworthy and virtuous, as we saw in the previous verses (7-9), then one should not only listen to her straightforward message but also act on it.

In other words, ‘take it’ or ‘choose it’. Because she is more valuable than material wealth, than jewels, her quality is better than “corals”. She boldly says, “Choose my instructions instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold”.

I know, we all like to have some of these precious metals saved up or to carry them on our bodies. But Lady Wisdom is saying, as valuable as those may be, they are not worth comparing to the value she adds to anyone's life who chooses her virtues.

In fact, hear what verse 11 says, "for wisdom is more precious than rubies and nothing you desire can compare to her." I mean, the fame, praise of men, the glamor, education, wealth, celebrity stardom, none of these would ever compare to what it means to have the wisdom of the Lord (aka, fear of the Lord).

A story is told of a very renowned minister of God, who was outed for an outright sinful behavior that caused a massive scandal. This is what he had to say: "My brothers and sisters, you did not let me down. You cared for me and prayed for me, as you should. I basked in the glory of our successes and continued to love the Lord, but his fear had left my heart". In other words, I exchanged the virtue of wisdom for the glories of silver and gold—or power and fame.

On the other hand, take our brother Charlie Kirk, who was recently assassinated. When he was interviewed, I believe not long before he met his death, on how he would want to be remembered when he dies, he boldly said, **"I have traveled around the world, being on Air Force One, met world leaders, built a successful movement, but none of that matters. I would want to be remembered for the courage of being bold for my faith and my relationship with Jesus Christ"**. That, my friends, sounds like someone who chose Wisdom. Whereas he died at a young age, he would continue to live in our collective memories as not only the astute activist he was, but a true soldier of the cross of Jesus Christ.

The question for us all this morning is where lies your most genuine pursuit? What do you value more in your life? Silver, gold, rubies, power, fame, success, family, education, career? Have you paid close attention to your life lately? Do eternal things matter to you the way they should? Do you seek the fear of the Lord as the secret enticement of your heart? These are questions we should not let go of for too long from the front burners of our lives. Otherwise, our hearts begin to wander slowly without us noticing it.

I personally regularly engage in this exercise during my solitude. I examine my flawed heart to see if my core values in the Lord still hold. Of which wisdom is a highly sought-after delight in my life in all my years of walking with the Lord. **So, it is no brainer that my wife and children know that one of my favorite quotes is by Socrates, which says, "An unexamined life is a life not worth living."** I am glad my son has also made this his personal quote. And probably our daughters, too. The scriptural text that goes with that for me is Psalm 139:23-24,

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart!

Try me and know my thoughts!^[c]

²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!"

Wisdom is calling, do not ignore her voice.

II. Wisdom's Characteristics (8:12-36)

Now let's look at the second movement, which deals with the characteristics of Lady Wisdom. Which would include her identity, i.e., who she is, her influence, i.e., what she does, her inception, i.e., where she comes from, and her incentives, i.e., what she gives. According to our text in verses 12-36.

i. Identity (Who she is) vv. 12-14

After claiming the kind of value for her words, Wisdom goes on to explain other values by which she is identified in the prologue, such as "prudence," "knowledge", "discretion", and "insight," which all boil down to the stated foundation of the entire book, which is the "fear of the Lord" v. 13a.

She also identifies herself as one who hates "pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech" v. 13b. It is no brainer to assert here that these character traits are invariably the hallmarks of a wise person.

You may be smart and intelligent in many ways, but a true and wise person would be known by some of these character traits. She also identifies herself with some other skills like "counsel", "sound judgment", "insight", and "strength".

She sounds like an "accomplished consultant, one who possesses the capacity both to conceive a plan and communicate to others." (Ansberry, Christopher B.). There is everything to love about being wise. Of course, in the way of the Lord, which is to honor him reverentially and to hate what is evil in his sight. Wisdom is appealing to all of our hearts this morning. She is begging us to desire her, choose her, apply her in our everyday life, and keep her virtue for as long as we live.

ii. Influence (What she does) vv. 15-21

The influence of wisdom on our individual lives and at the psycho-social or governmental levels is immeasurable. Listen to how she speaks at the beginning of vv. 15 & 16, "By me kings reigns" and "by me princes govern". This highlights Wisdom's instrumental role in establishing an ordered society.

For it is only by her that kings would rule justly and princes govern well. Therefore, any nation whose leaders in positions of power abandon their moral compass to fight for its vulnerable and maintain just governance for all would begin to see an erosion of its social fabric.

She continues to exert her influence on all and sundry, not only on the powers that be, but also on a worldwide audience. Hence, she makes this endearing declaration in verse 17, that "I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me".

Which I believe is the true meaning of "inclusivity". No class, no gender, no race, or tribal grouping, nor the alphabet brigade, is singled out here. We are all included. If you

“love wisdom, she will love you. If you seek her, you find her”, which is to fear the Lord and hate evil.

It is interesting, though, that the verse that directly follows this may sound somewhat exclusive because of the language of wealth. It says, “Riches and honor are with me.” And this is where the health and wealth gospel might be misused, taken out of context, by implying that everyone who seeks wisdom will be and must be “rich.”

But we cannot miss the other half of the verse, which speaks about “enduring wealth and righteousness.” And I love the word “righteousness” because every Christian should understand that our worth is not measured by the amount of our earthly possessions, but solely by the righteousness of God through Christ.

Not that those earthly things are of no importance. No! Wisdom only suggests that what she has to offer is superior to those things. VV. 19-21, says,

“My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold, and my yield than choice silver.

²⁰ I walk in the way of righteousness, in the paths of justice,

²¹ granting an inheritance to those who love me, and filling their treasuries.

Her inheritance outlasts death. They are stable, reliable, and eternal because they are attained in accord with righteousness. In other words, the economic wealth she bestows is also ethical. They bring everlasting satisfaction and desirability because they are not only signified by who she is or what she does, but what she bestows on those who love her.

iii. Inception (Where she comes from) vv. 22-31

Now Wisdom has brought us into some deep waters of exploration. Because she highlights her preeminence before the foundations of the earth were laid, her presence at creation, and her activity after creation. These are really bold claims. First, her preeminence before creation. Verses 22-26 read:

“The Lord possessed^[b] me at the beginning of his work,^[c]
the first of his acts of old.

²³ Ages ago I was set up,
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

²⁴ When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.

²⁵ Before the mountains had been shaped,
before the hills, I was brought forth,

²⁶ before he had made the earth with its fields,
or the first of the dust of the world.

In essence, Solomon presents wisdom as the first creation of God. In other words, she was the token by which God brought into existence everything that is made. She was

the creative agent, the factory or workshop from which God manufactured everything by his spoken words.

When Job tried to argue with God during his trials, God asked him one question that made Job rethink all his would-be accusations against God. The simple question was, “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?” (Job 38:4) Well, to that question, Wisdom gladly answers Job as a credible witness that, “When he [God] established the heavens, I [Wisdom] was there” (8:27), and brother Job, you were not.

Like any credible witness, Wisdom goes on to present more factual evidence to buttress her claim that she was present at creation. She says in (v. 29-30)

³⁰ Then I was beside him, like a master workman,
and I was daily his^[e] delight,
rejoicing before him always,
³¹ rejoicing in his inhabited world
and delighting in the children of man.

Where else do you see such a bold witness in the gospels that makes a similar claim? If you said John 1, you are right. John presents the Son of God to us as an accomplice during the creation story. John says,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made (John 1:1-3)

In essence, what John writes about the Word in the gospels, Wisdom claims about herself in Proverbs. This is similar to what Drew mentioned in his first teaching in this series, that just as “fear of the Lord” was the means to knowing God in the OT, faith in Christ is the way to knowing God in the NT. And by the way, not that the fear of the Lord is no longer a part of the equation. But it is now the proof that we have put our faith in God through Christ.

Because, whereas we cannot fully support from this context that the personification of Wisdom was synonymous with Christ, we can nonetheless accommodate the assertion that it was a pointer ahead toward Christ, just as we have established the connection between John 1 (the presence of the Word at creation) and Proverbs 8:30 (the presence of Wisdom at creation).

However, care must be taken here not to equate Wisdom’s presence at creation as being a part of the God head. She was a tool in the hand of the Master Creator, while the Son of God (the Word) was the means of creation itself because everything was made through him, and without him, nothing was made.

Like any credible witness, she concludes her testimony with the fact that she was also present after the creation. She declares her overflowing joy and delight in all of God’s

creation and her audience, for whom she makes this compelling testimony – i.e., those who would embrace her message.

iv. Incentives (*What she gives*) vv. 32-36

But nothing beats her final declaration or the incentives she bestows on those who choose to heed her call. Verses 32-36 read:

- ³² “And now, O sons, listen to me:
blessed are those who keep my ways.
³³ Hear instruction and be wise,
and do not neglect it.
³⁴ Blessed is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting beside my doors.
³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life
and obtains favor from the Lord,
³⁶ but he who fails to find me injures himself;
all who hate me love death.”

These verses have three components that we should not miss. There is an exhortation (vv. 32-33), the blessing (v.34), and the consequences (vv. 35-36). First, the exhortation. We see a repetition of vv. 4-11, where she called on all mankind (the simple, aka uncommitted to the downright foolish) to listen to her call. However, we see a shift here to a specific reference to “sons”, plural, followed by the imperative, “listen to me... and listen to my instructions,” plus “do not ignore it.”

These are strong exhortations, because Wisdom is appealing to the ones she delights in, that is, you and me, the children of God. Her appeal is not in vain, because she wants to lend us the blessings of God that are reserved only for the companions of Wisdom. Verse 30 says

- ³⁴ Blessed is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting beside my doors

These blessings are directly linked to our response to her call. They are not casual or randomly slide our way when we are constantly walking in rebellion to her instructions. In fact, we observe from the text that it is a lifelong process of persistence, as indicated by the call to daily watch at my gates and wait beside my doors.

As one author puts it, this implies that “one demonstrates one’s desire and love for Wisdom by aligning one’s body and geographical position with their inward disposition.” (Ansberry, Christopher B.)

After all of that exhortation and promise of blessing comes the final component, which is the consequences. VV.35-36 read

³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life
and obtains favor from the Lord,
³⁶ but he who fails to find me injures himself;
all who hate me love death.”

This is crystal clear and needs no further explanation. It takes us back to the main point I intended to convince you about from the passage, that, 'Fruitful life awaits those who pay heed to Wisdom's call, but destruction will befall those who pay heed to Folly.'

When our children were in elementary, middle, and high school, respectively, we spent over a year and a half going through the book of Proverbs with them. One of my favorite quotes that emerged from that exercise, among many, was one that I coined, which my children know by heart to this day. It says, **“When instructions fail, destruction prevails”**. I think this is where I got that from. Wisdom says, “Find me, find life, ignore me, incur injuries. Hate me, love death.” Case closed!

III. The Contrasting Outcomes of Wisdom & Folly's Invitation (9:1-17)

We have just looked at the exhortation, benefits, and consequences of listening to or ignoring Wisdom's call. But Chapter 9 shifts gears to a new dimension. In this final discourse or bookend of the first section of Proverbs, Solomon pits Wisdom against another rival called Woman Folly. One interesting aspect is that both women will be competing against each other, with similar invitations extended to their potential guests, hoping to see who receives the most RSVPs.

One would assume that at this point, after listening to all of the speech of Lady Wisdom and what she has to offer, no one will fall for something less than the best one can afford. But that's not the case; otherwise, the gate that leads to heaven through Christ would not be called the narrow gate in the gospel of Matthew 7:13-14. In fact, hear what it says,

“Enter by **the narrow gate**. For **the gate** is wide and **the way** is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.
For **the gate** is **narrow** and **the way** is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

Let us read Lady Wisdom's invitation first. It reads,

Wisdom has built her house;
she has hewn her seven pillars.
² She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
³ She has sent out her young women to call
from the highest places in the town,

⁴ “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”

To him who lacks sense, she says,

⁵ “Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.

⁶ Leave your simple ways,^[f] and live,
and walk in the way of insight.”

You will notice a reversal back to her initial call on the simple, uncommitted, and outright foolish in heart, in the prologue. She is literally pleading once more that all these people will hear and have a change of mind, embracing her. It is reflective of what Titus 2:11-12 once again reminds us about that,

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

The gospel's offer of salvation is intended for all people, and this truth provides a basis for sharing the good news with everyone, as indicated in other verses, such as Luke 2:10.

¹⁰ And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”

However, as stated previously, Solomon presents us with a grandiose setting of Wisdom's construction of her house, symbolizing perfection, elaborate meal preparation, and a fine dining setting, and sends out her maids to gather people from the highways and byways – the simple, those who lack sense. Just say to them, turn away from your simple ways, come and eat. In echoing that same sentiment, here is how the prophet Isaiah puts it in Isaiah 55:1

“Come, everyone who thirsts, **come** to the waters; **and** he who has no **money**, **come**, **buy** and eat! **Come**, **buy** wine **and** milk **without money and without** price.

The Lord has prepared a feast for all who are willing to welcome his invitation. The only requirement is to turn away from your rebellion and accept his offer FOC. But of course, as would be expected, there will always be scoffers and mockers of this valid message of the gospel, no matter how much sense we purport it to make. Otherwise, Charlie, like many other saints of old, would not have lost their life defending this message.

⁷ Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse,
and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury.

⁸ Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;
reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

⁹ Give instruction^[g] to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;

This interruption of the textual flow is a hard one to interpret. However, one can also perceive its relevance from what follows next. This is the central theme of the entire book of Proverbs – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy is understanding.” You would notice that even though it may sound like it is suggesting a prohibition about correcting the scoffer and reproving the wicked lest you get abused or injured, she ends that verse on a positive note, that “Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser”.

And if you looked back at what the guest list was for this banquet, it was everybody – the simple, the uncommitted, foolish in heart, and those who lack sense. In other words, mockers and scoffers could have been included. Similarly, our goal in inviting people to the blessed gospel should not be laced with our own intimidation or fear of abuse or injury. We do not know those whom God will bring unto himself. Our duty is to tell fearlessly, which I am personally aspiring toward in the wake of our brother Charlie’s assassination.

Now, Chapter 9 comes to a close with a focus on this strange Woman Folly, who is competing for the same guests as Lady Wisdom.

- 13 The woman Folly is loud;
she is seductive^[h] and knows nothing.
- 14 She sits at the door of her house;
she takes a seat on the highest places of the town,
- 15 calling to those who pass by,
who are going straight on their way,
- 16 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!”
And to him who lacks sense she says,
- 17 “Stolen water is sweet,
and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”
- 18 But he does not know that the dead^[i] are there,
that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

Unlike Lady Wisdom, the Woman Folly has not done the hard work of preparation. However, she has something enticing up her sleeve. And that is the power of seduction. She sent no maids to the highways and byways; instead, she sits at the highest places of town, making the same pitch to the same audience as Lady Wisdom – the simple, and those who lack sense to come to her because, as she puts in v.17, “Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” This is a direct reference to sexual sin. As they say, sin thrives in secrecy and provides an illusion or false satisfaction, until it ensnares and devours you.

But like the adulteress woman in chapter 7, the invitation of Folly ends in a complete disaster to all who accept her invitation. V. 18 closes us out with this, “¹⁸ But he does not know that the dead^[i] are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.” So, this brings us back to the title of this message, which is **The Contrasting Appeals of Two**

Women – Lady Wisdom and Woman Folly: Choose Wisdom. We have looked at Lady

- I. Wisdom's Calls (8:1-11)
- II. Wisdom's Characteristics (8:12-36)
 - i. Identity (Who she is)
 - ii. Influence (What she does)
 - iii. Inception (Where she comes from)
 - iv. Incentives (What she gives)

And finally, we concluded with the

- III. Contrasting Outcomes of Wisdom & Folly's Invitation (9:1-17)

Now, here are some takeaways or applications I will leave you with.

Consider both Christians and non-Christians.

- **For Christians** – 1. Strive to embrace wisdom at all costs, because it is profitable for a fruitful living. 2. Do not be enticed by the allure of folly; it only leads to destruction. 3. If you want to be wise, fear the Lord. 4. Do not despise instructions, and you will be wiser. 5. If you seek wisdom with all your heart, you will find her and will obtain favor from the Lord.
- **Non-Christian** – 1. Destruction awaits those who reject wisdom, which is in essence the fear of the Lord. However, the invitation to embrace wisdom and live is extended to everyone who would come to faith in Jesus. 2. Listen to instructions, and you will be wise. 3. The temporary pleasures of folly end with bitter consequences.

Let us pray...