

## The Calls of the Wild

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Living within our over-stimulated, sound-bite centric, advertising-saturated culture, what gets your attention? In this wild world, what voices do you hear distinctly, even amidst the considerable noise? Proverbs 9 offers a particularly revealing analysis of our hearts by contrasting the call of Wisdom (the Word of God or, more accurately, Christ) and the call of Folly (sin). Cast in the picture of a woman calling out to individuals wandering through a city, verses 1-6 describe the call of Wisdom:

*Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars. She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has also set her table. She has sent out her maids, and she calls from the highest point of the city. "Let all who are simple come in here!" she says to those who lack judgment. "Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding."*

In contrast, verses 13-18 depict the call of Folly:

*The woman Folly is loud; she is undisciplined and without knowledge. She sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the highest point of the city, calling out to those who pass by, who go straight on their way. "Let all who are simple come in here!" she says to those who lack judgment. "Stolen water is sweet; food eaten in secret is delicious!" But little do they know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of the grave.*

Which of these calls do you know best?

Consider the call of Wisdom, an invitation to "leave your simple ways," to "live," and to "walk in the way of understanding." Are these the things you seek after in your heart? Does a call to "all who are simple" inspire hope and joy within you, bursting with the truth of our position before Christ? Does a call to "those who lack of judgment" remind you of the grace of God and his tender mercy, nourishment, and promises to refine and purify his people?

Ponder as well the call of Folly, a proclamation that "stolen water is sweet," and that "food eaten in secret is delicious." Do you long for things you cannot have? Do your desires intensify when you see an opportunity to take something that is not yours or gain an advantage over others? Does your heart long for secret or private indulgence or pleasure? Do you find some aspects of secrecy alluring? Do these proclamations seem to be founded on a degree of truth? Do your experiences support such claims?

Amidst great contrasts, note the striking, and literally identical, chord (verses 4 and 16) of "Let all who are simple come in here!" she says to those who lack judgment." While not the way we prefer to think of ourselves, this assessment is foundationally accurate to the

passage and never questioned. In the call of Wisdom, these words in the indicative move us to humility and drive us to the healing nourishment of Christ. In the call of Folly, these words in the indicative move us to shame and drive us to the pursuit of our passions and desires, which end in death.

Our world is wild. Two calls abound and compete for our hearts. One God reigns supreme. Meditate on the calls of Proverbs 9, probe the desires of your heart, and run to the nourishment of Christ! Eat and drink heartily at the table of Wisdom, and He will teach you to see the hidden barbs and the fingerprints of death on the offerings of Folly. By His mercy, He will change our hearts and teach us to “walk in the way of understanding.”