

March 19th of 2023

Proverbs

Sayings of the Wise



3rd Commandment & Proverbs?

If keeping the First Commandment is fearing, loving, and trusting in God with your heart, and keeping the Second Commandment is fearing, loving, and trusting in God with your lips, then keeping the Third Commandment is fearing loving, and trusting in God with your ears.

Let us hear the Third Commandment and its meaning: Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

Perhaps it is beneficial to examine the words, hold, hear, and learn. Indeed, not only is the Third Commandment about the gift of rest and refreshment after a hard week of work, it is also about hearing, holding, and learning from God's Holy Writ. And so, Proverbs has much to say about 'hearing.' Consider the following verses in Proverbs about hearing: 1:5, 1:8, 2:1, 4:1, 4:10, 8:6, 8:33, 19:27, 22:17, 23:19, etc. To summarize, Proverbs attributes wisdom, longevity of life, insight, understanding, and so forth to 'listening.'

STUDY 4

3RD COMMANDMENT & PROVERBS?

WORSHIP: WHO IS THE AUDIENCE

THE IMPORTANT PEW?

EARS HEAR WISDOM

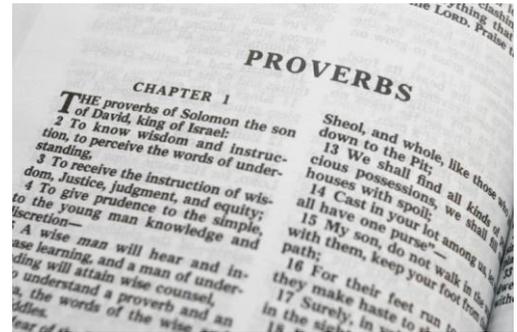
CENSORSHIP OR DISCERNING EARS?

Worship: Who is the Audience?

The worship service is not about what you can do for Jesus; it's about God's Word and what it tells you your Savior has done and is doing for you. The Divine Service on Sundays is not mainly about us speaking to God in worship in order to summon His presence and offer Him praise so that we can impress Him and obtain kudo points. This view sees God as the audience of our worship. This way sees us as the ones coming before God and doing all sorts of spiritual jumping jacks and spiritual work in order to get the Lord to notice us and then hopefully respond to us with kudos. Christian worship is the exact opposite. God is the speaker. We are the audience. He calls us before Him so that He might give His Gifts to us.

Ears Hear Wisdom - Words

Words and wisdom go together. Scriptures say that words and wisdom always go together with one more thing: Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Word and wisdom of God: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God." (Jn 1:1-2). Through Jesus Christ, the Word and wisdom of God, creation was created: "All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (1:3) And through Jesus Christ, the Word and wisdom of God, creation is re-created: "Whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life" (Jn 5:24). When many of Jesus' disciples turned and walked away from Him, Jesus asked the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well? Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.'" (Jn 6:67-68). Words and wisdom and Jesus Christ always go together. Proverbs 8 proffers what Christians know to be true: wisdom is not merely an abstract idea like physics or philosophy; wisdom is a concrete person: "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14). When the Holy Spirit leads us to keep the Third Commandment, seeking wisdom in the Word of God, we are listening to Jesus Christ Himself (Jn 5:39; 15:26). See also Proverbs 8:32-36.



The Important Pew?

Sitting in the pew is often viewed as being secondary, lazy, inactive, or boring. Again, listening with ears in the pew is supposedly not important, whereas speaking and doing things up front is so much better. But if this is the case, though, why did Jesus heal the deaf man in our reading from the Gospel of Mark? He certainly did not need to, for the man could already see, walk, and most likely work with his hands. If hearing is not important, why did the old Lutheran Pastors from five hundred years ago lick their fingers and shove spit into the ears of babies before baptizing them, saying, "Ephphatha, be opened"? If listening is subpar, secondary, and unimportant, why did Jesus tell his followers to listen over 120 times in the Gospels? If speaking is better than listening, why does Proverbs 10:19 say, "When words are many, transgression is not lacking." In other words, it is better to listen first, then think, and then speak (See Proverbs 29:20). And so, to the point, it is not wise to respect people who are bored with sitting in a pew. Furthermore, a pastor should always covet his parishioners' pews, knowing that they have the best seats in the house.

Censorship or Discerning Ears?

It is important that our mouths speak nobly; however, it is also just as important for our ears to listen with discernment. Biblical Christianity has a long history of not sheltering ears but equipping them to hear rightly. Indeed, when we only censor the mouths of the godless, we are not sheltering ears but propping up Christians to be naïve infants tossed to and fro by every wind of false doctrine. There is no such thing as a naïve Christian ear but rather, a wise discerning Christian ear. Christians don't need censorship like tyrants, but instead, we depend on discerning ears shaped by the Wisdom of God.