

Val and I just returned from two weeks in PNG. It was a wonderful trip spent with friends both old and new. Along with the opportunity to speak to the team and sitting in on team meetings, I had the joy of teaching an overview of Proverbs to some of our MKs. I love Proverbs! I read a chapter of Proverbs every AM as I begin my time in the Word. (today is the 23rd, so I read chapter 23) I also memorized Proverbs 9 this month. But it's more than that I love Proverbs; I need Proverbs. I am in desperate need of wisdom every day. And it's a sobering reality that the wisest man who ever lived died like a fool. If he could walk away from the wisdom he himself penned, how much greater is the danger for me. *Wisdom attained does not guarantee wisdom retained.* The only way to retain wisdom is to keep on listening to its voice.

Two Voices, Two Choices, Two Consequences

How many voices do you hear in a given day? Voices of family, friends, media, neighbors, strangers, passersby voices of young people, old people, in-between people voices of anger, compassion, excitement, boredom happy and sad voices loud and soft voices spoken, shouted, and singing voices? But they all have this in common *they all present a message. They all require analysis.* They generally fall into two categories **voices of truth and voices of deception.**

The first thing we discover about God (Gen 1) is that He speaks. He has a voice. His voice is powerful. His voice is dependable. His voice is absolute, unchanging, eternal truth. **His is the first voice. Those who listen to this voice will find life. Prov 1:7**

Then there is a second voice; the voice of the Serpent. His voice is seductive, deceptive and destructive. Those who listen to this voice will find death. Prov 14:12 John 10

Adam and Eve heard both voices; and *two voices require a choice* which voice shall we listen to? They made the wrong choice, listened to the second voice, and the consequences spoken by the first voice came to pass. (if you will die).

Which voice has captured your ear lately?

- í the voice of discouragement, fear and doubt or the voice of faith? (I can do all things through Christ)
- í the voice of deceit and distrust or the voice of truth? (I am with you always; to the end of the age)
- í the voice of discontent, envy and greed or the voice of praise? (Having food and clothing, let us be content)
- í the voice of disappointment and self pity or the voice of peace? (Be still, and know that I am God)
- í the voice of distress, anger and bitterness or the voice of forgiveness? (Father, forgive them)

The wise man is the one who chooses to listen to and follow the voice of truth; the voice of God. And God has given us His voice, His words, in writing so that we might have them forever to guide us. But *access to truth is not enough.* I must discipline myself to seek His voice, to heed His voice, to act in obedience to His voice. Since we live in a world of constant deception and deceit, it is imperative to return again and again to hear and obey the voice of God. Prov 19:27; Psalm 119:9, 11

What's your "discipline of the Word" look like? Here's what I do. I read through the Bible every year, by reading 6 books a month, plus Proverbs. I also spend a few minutes each day memorizing scripture. My journaling includes a *What*, a *So What* and a *Now What*. *What* does it say? (About God, man, sin, promise, principle, command, choice, consequence) *So what* does it mean? (One main point about one of these) *Now what* should I do about it in the next 24 hours?

It's essential for us who handle the Word all the time to make certain we ourselves are being *handled by it.* Constant exposure to truth not acted upon leads to a hardened, hypocritical heart. May God deliver us from being mere mouthpieces of truth instead of living letters known and read by all men.

For Further Study: Proverbs 9; Genesis 1-3; Psalm 46; Deut 28-31; Joshua 1:1-9; John 10 and 15; Psalm 119; 1 Samuel 3 and 15

Lord, Your voice is altogether true and trustworthy. I long for the day when every voice of evil and deceit will be silenced and truth alone will prevail. Until that hour, give me a discerning ear and a disciplined mind to embrace truth and reject deception. Grant me the insight to reject the seductive whispers of self pity, envy and fault finding that arise within me. I confess that my own heart is deceitful and leads me astray. Deliver me from listening to myself, O My King. Write Your law on my heart with the pen of grace and fill me with Thy truth. Let me not wander from Thy voice. Speak Lord, for Your servant is listening. Awake my ear with the dawn to listen to Thy truth and awake my heart to embrace it and my life to display it. Speak to me, O God of Truth, that You may speak through me words of light life in this dark and dying world. I ask in the Name of Him Who is The Way, the Truth and the Life. Amen.

Remember, you are very special to us and are praying for you continually.

Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows, spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts. We are Pilgrims in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY.