

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 23, 2018



THE LESSON Proverbs 31:10-31

¹⁰A competent wife, how does one find her? Her value is far above pearls. ¹¹Her husband entrusts his heart to her, and with her he will have all he needs. ¹²She brings him good and not trouble all the days of her life. ¹³She seeks out wool and flax; she works joyfully with her hands. ¹⁴She is like a fleet of merchant ships, bringing food from a distance. ¹⁵She gets up while it is still night, providing food for her household, even some for her female servants. ¹⁶She surveys a field and acquires it; from her own resources, she plants a vineyard. ¹⁷She works energetically; her arms are powerful. ¹⁸She realizes that her trading is successful; she doesn't put out her lamp at night. ¹⁹She puts her hands to the spindle; her palms grasp the whorl. ²⁰She reaches out to the needy; she stretches out her

hands to the poor. ²¹She doesn't fear for her household when it snows, because they are all dressed in warm clothes. ²²She makes bedspreads for herself; fine linen and purple are her clothing. ²³Her husband is known in the city gates when he sits with the elders of the land. ²⁴She makes garments and sells them; she supplies sashes to traders. ²⁵Strength and honor are her clothing; she is confident about the future. ²⁶Her mouth is full of wisdom; kindly teaching is on her tongue. ²⁷She is vigilant over the activities of her household; she doesn't eat the food of laziness. ²⁸Her children bless her; her husband praises her: ²⁹"Many women act competently, but you surpass them all!" ³⁰Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. ³¹Let her share in the results of her work; let her deeds praise her in the city gates.

THE RESPONSE Psalm 1

The truly happy person doesn't follow wicked advice, doesn't stand on the road of sinners, and doesn't sit with the disrespectful.

Instead of doing those things, these persons love the LORD's instruction, and they recite God's instruction day and night!

¹They are like a tree replanted by streams of water, which bears fruit at just the right time and whose leaves don't fade.

Whatever they do succeeds.

²That's not true for the wicked! They are like dust that the wind blows away.

³And that's why the wicked will have no standing in the court of justice—neither will sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁴The LORD is intimately acquainted with the way of the righteous,

but the way of the wicked is destroyed.

THE EPISTLE

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

¹³Are any of you wise and understanding? Show that your actions are good with a humble lifestyle that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴However, if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, then stop bragging and living in ways that deny the truth. ¹⁵This is not the wisdom that comes down from above. Instead, it is from the earth, natural and demonic. ¹⁶Wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and everything that is evil. ¹⁷What of the wisdom from above? First, it is pure, and then peaceful, gentle, obedient, filled with mercy and good actions, fair,

and genuine. ¹⁸Those who make peace sow the seeds of justice by their peaceful acts.

⁴What is the source of conflict among you? What is the source of your disputes? Don't they come from your cravings that are at war in your own lives? ⁵You long for something you don't have, so you commit murder. You are jealous for something you can't get, so you struggle and fight. You don't have because you don't ask. ⁶You ask and don't have because you ask with evil intentions, to waste it on your own cravings. . . .

⁷Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will run away from you. ⁸Come near to God, and he will come near to you.

THE GOSPEL Mark 9:30-37

³⁰From there Jesus and his followers went through Galilee, but he didn't want anyone to know it. ³¹This was because he was teaching his disciples, "The Human One will be delivered into human hands. They will kill him. Three days after he is killed he will rise up." ³²But they didn't understand this kind of talk, and they were afraid to ask him.

³³They entered Capernaum. When they had come into a house, he asked them, "What were you arguing

about during the journey?" ³⁴They didn't respond, since on the way they had been debating with each other about who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be least of all and the servant of all." ³⁶Jesus reached for a little child, placed him among the Twelve, and embraced him. Then he said, ³⁷"Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me isn't actually welcoming me but rather the one who sent me."

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