

start over with Noah and his family. But the sin problem continued, as God knew it would, and it wasn't long in the generations following even till our day, we are back into the same trouble and wicked generations full of evil. We need Jesus to be the Saviour of sinners or things will only always get worse and worse, even yes, in your family and mine, and with our children's children too. The Lord through Agur is speaking in our text, calling for honest awareness of our times, leading us ever and again to be in the world but not of it, and to always be looking to Christ Jesus to save and keep us.

Our text directs us to Christ, yet what if you won't hear Him, and be drawn to Him, but instead will go on as part of the evil generation in which we live? Then, as verse 17 graphically declares, you will meet with a fearful end. The flood of evil in our times, when pursued and you live and die in it, will bring ultimately and justly from God's side, awful eternal punishment. God is not kidding either. If He was then Jesus wouldn't have gone to the cross and suffered the horrible agonizing cruel death He went through there in the place of His people. Will you live expressing honest awareness of our age and seeking escape from the surging wicked generation of mankind by nature?

This leads yet to my last point about Agur-like flood-conquering wisdom, namely, his godly insights gleaned from nature. In verses 15-16 and actually in much of the rest of the chapter, Agur shows such godly insight on life, learning even from leeches, spiders, and ants! I can't expand here but invite you to read through Proverbs 30 and find there for yourself the many life lessons, spiritual eternal lessons, Agur gleaned from looking at nature in the light of God's Word. Agur's godly insights from the realm of nature are worth more than gold, and so precious and relevant indeed!

Christ, through Agur has been preaching to us wisdom's way. Will you hear His voice, and looking to Christ in spirit and truth show utmost humility before God and man and utmost regard for all God's Word, a spiritual attitude in all your ways with all you have, an honest awareness of our age, and godly insight, learning wisdom even from nature? God's true people follow wisdom's way by God's grace. The opposite of wisdom's way, is the way of the fool! How are you living before God and man - with Agur-like wisdom? Isn't it the need of the hour? Amen.

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



'AGUR-LIKE' WISDOM [2]

We are studying Agur-like wisdom based on Proverbs 30 which Agur, led by God the Holy Spirit, wrote. Last time we saw the way of true wisdom is a humble heart and mindset, especially in regards to God. This week we will notice four other details about true wisdom as Agur expressed and reflected this. Let me read just a few of the verses in the first half of Proverbs 30, and encourage you to read the chapter for yourself later. *"The words of Agur.... Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.... Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.... There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.... The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough: The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough. The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."*

Having noted his utmost humility before God, notice next Agur shows too, utmost regard for God's holy Word. He shows this in verses 5&6 confessing there that God's Word is so pure and trustworthy as the Source of all wisdom. He says about the Holy Scripture that it is not to be added to, meaning surely it is not to be trifled with or despised, but to be wholeheartedly completely respected and trusted and followed after. You see how this point goes together with the first? Without utmost humility you won't have utmost regard for God's Word, but when you know that there is no wisdom of ourselves, and how much we need wisdom, then won't you begin also to listen to God's holy Word so full of true wisdom from the first word to the last word, cover to cover? Notice too Agur testifies not only to regarding God's Word highly, but trusting it really. Wisdom's way is not just about lip-service to God's Word, but about hearty faith and submission and dependence upon all God's Word. Are you are living this way too?

It is a very sad fact that in the world God's Word is despised and rejected altogether. But what is even more sad and tragic is when in the Christian church too, God's Word is so little respected and all too often undermined and disregarded and not followed. Are you honouring God's Word as His inspired infallible Word to us and for us? Do you read God's Word and live in humble submission to it? Or do you generally not think too much about God's Word, and read it hardly, and skim it only, and are you mostly simply just bored with it all? In too many churches today people only want fun and entertainment in church, but not serious study and preaching and teaching from out of God's Word. In how many churches is God's Word hardly read at all, or it is given only very little attention. Thank God there are still also churches wanting to be committed and faithful to God's Word, and we may rejoice wherever that is still the case!

My point now is, the reason why this world and the church too is in such crisis situation is that people live ignoring and discounting and discrediting and despising God's holy Word. But God's Word, says Jesus in Matthew 24:35, will not pass away but abides forever, come what may, and if you are wise, you will hold the Scriptures most dear, and live under and by the Word of God with all your heart. The Holy Scriptures are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, says Paul in II Timothy 3:15. Agur writes in verse 5, *"Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him."* Will you listen and follow Agur-like wisdom, seeing that from our text in it's showing us the need for utmost humility before God and man, and utmost regard for the Holy Bible?

Notice a third mark of Agur-like wisdom is having a spiritual attitude toward earthly things. This doesn't mean you don't care about your possessions and that you shouldn't act responsibly with whatever you have, but that you view it all in the light of what counts so much more and what is most important of all. In verses 7-9 of our text passage, Agur shows that, for one, he will have his priorities right. Notice in his asking two things of God. The first he asks is that he be kept from falsehood and lies altogether. In other words he prays to be a person of spiritual integrity and uprightness before God and man. Before his material concerns and requests, he asks for spiritual realities being set right and true in his life. Only then does he, secondly, ask regarding his physical and material matters.

How is this with you? Do you count spiritual matters as highest priority in your life? For how many people the things they possess is what possesses them! Not so the true believer when wise in God's ways. Then you know even if you should lose all you own of earthly goods, yet in and through Christ you have riches of eternal worth and substance. Is this your view too, or are you so enamored by the world's toys and earth's goods, that really you are living for just that only?

The text shows us that Agur doesn't only see spiritual matters as more important than earthly things, but also he prays in verses 8&9 that God will give him of physical and material blessings exactly as will most enable him to live to God's praise and glory. He doesn't want riches which will make him forget God and prays against such poverty that he would be led to stealing and crime to survive. Agur understood sinful human nature so easily forgetting God or quickly despising God, so he prays for God to feed him with the food convenient for him, or most suitable or fitted for him for his spiritual and eternal wellbeing, and for the most faithful godly witness on his part. God knows what is best for each one of us and Agur entrusted himself to the LORD so to guide and guard him in His ways. Is this your spiritual attitude too? Have you learned from God's wisdom how true contentment and joy are unrelated to the amount of possessions you have, and in spite of whatever circumstances you may meet? Christ Jesus Himself is through His Word now urging you and me in wisdom's way. Are you listening to His voice, and will you too follow in His way of grace and truth?

The question is urgent, for notice the next point about Agur's flood-conquering wisdom. From verses 10-14 we learn Agur also shows honest awareness of his times. He describes for us in verses 10-14 the proud, godless, self-righteous, violent age he was living in, and isn't the same true of our age? We live in a wicked, godless, self-centered, evil, brutal age and that shows itself in all kinds of ways, and as time goes on, it is not getting better either. Do you have eyes to see the corrupt and arrogant and chaotic state of our society? The fearful part is that in church, with people of the church, there are far too many taking in exactly what the world is into and showing sadly the same ungodly, self-righteous, lofty, disrespectful spirit so prevalent in our world. Today there is so little shock about sin and conviction of sin and sorrow about sin, and all too many are just caught up with this evil generation and all that it offers. People will look at you as if you are from Mars, for instance, when you say something like, "Don't you see how wrong and wicked that behaviour is, and how ungodly such a movie is, and how offensive to God and His holiness is that practice or that viewpoint?"

But Agur showed honest awareness of the devilish and degrading influence of sin, and he calls a spade a spade. When he talks about the generation that shows no respect for parents and that lives in sinful filthy ways but acts as if all is well, we should not think he is speaking here only of the younger generation, but it can be true of the adults and middle-aged and even of older ones. Agur is describing man without God in his heart and life. We become as brutes before God and man, careless about others and lovers of self and pleasure only, and whoever stops us just better get out of our way! We are living in times as it was in the days of Noah, when the evil was so bad God sent a world-wide flood to clean up this earth, and as it were,