

Radiant and Unfading

Take-Home • Session 6: Kings, Seek Wisdom

What We Found

Chapter 6 begins by addressing rulers and reminding them that their authority comes from God and will be judged by him: your dominion was given you from the Lord, who will search out your works (6:3). We found Jesus saying this to power's face: you would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above (John 19:11). And we found him stating the same principle as a proverb: every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required (Luke 12:48). Our authority ultimately comes from God, and we are responsible to him for how we use it. The lowliest may be pardoned in mercy, the mighty will be mightily tested, and God is the one judge who is unimpressed by greatness, which is bad news for status and good news for justice.

Then, at verse 12, the tone changes, and we hear the words this study is named for: Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her, and is found by those who seek her. Easily. The early riser finds her already sitting at his gates; she goes about seeking those worthy of her and meets them in every thought. Even before we begin seeking God, he is already seeking us and drawing us toward himself: God calls man first, and our first step is always a response (CCC 2567). Finally we traced the sequence of 6:17-20, from sincere desire, to love, to love's obedience, to immortality, to nearness to God, to a kingdom. Everything this book promises begins with wanting it sincerely.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Bernard of Clairvaux • On Consideration, Books I-II (esp. I.2-4 and II.3 on occupations, II.6 on stewardship), to Pope Eugene III (c. 1148-1153)

Writing blunt counsel to his former monk, now pope: do not let administration and litigation consume the interior life a shepherd owes his people. Authority exists for the good of those entrusted to it, not for domination, and its holder will render an account. If the highest office in Christendom is held on such terms, so is every lesser one.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Augustine • Confessions X.27.38 (c. 397-401)

Late have I loved you, beauty ever ancient, ever new. You were within me, but I was outside, and there I searched for you. All the years he thought he was seeking, he was being sought; the road home has someone already on it, coming the other way.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Anselm of Canterbury • Proslogion, chapter 1 (11th century)

Lord, teach me to seek you, and show yourself to the seeker, for I cannot seek you unless you teach me how. Even the desire to seek God is already God's gift moving in us; desire and trust stand close to where

Wisdom 6:17 puts them: his first step is faith seeking understanding, Wisdom's is sincere desire for instruction.

Live It This Week

- **Read ahead, slowly. Read Wisdom 7:1-21 with a pencil. A king is about to tell you where he actually came from; mark everything that surprises you.**
- **Rise early once.** One morning this week, give God the first fifteen minutes of the day, before the phone. She is found sitting at the gates of the one who rises to seek her (6:14).
- **Examine your responsibilities. List the places where you have real authority or responsibility for others. For each one, write one concrete way you can serve them more faithfully this week.**
- **Pray for someone in authority. Pray by name for a boss, bishop, elected official, parent, teacher, or someone else who carries responsibility for others, especially one you would not have chosen. Ask God to give that person wisdom and mercy.**

Memory Verse

"Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her, and is found by those who seek her." **(Wisdom 6:12)**

Before next session: read Wisdom 7:1-21.

Catechism references: CCC 1899, CCC 2567.

Scripture We Opened

- Tonight's text: Wisdom 6:1-25
- The discovery: John 19:11 (power given from above)
- The discovery: Luke 12:48 (to whom much is given)
- Psalm 2:10-11 (be wise, O kings)
- Ezekiel 34 (the judgment of the shepherds)
- Proverbs 1:20-21 and 8:1-17 (Wisdom calling in the streets; those who seek me find me)
- Deuteronomy 11:1 and 30:16 (love the LORD and keep his commandments)
- Romans 13:1 (no authority except from God)
- 1 Timothy 2:1-2 (prayer for kings)
- Luke 19:10 (the Son of man came to seek)
- Matthew 7:7 (seek, and you will find)
- Wisdom 2:24 (the devil's envy; the speaker's foil at 6:23)
- Wisdom 2:12-16 (the wicked and the righteous man)
- Wisdom 7:1-21 (next week's reading)
- John 14:15; 1 John 5:3; Ephesians 2:8-10; Galatians 5:6