

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

May 13, 2018

That Card

by Frank Himmel



Today is Mother's Day, and I wish a happy one to all our moms.

Last week I went to buy a Mother's Day card for Sandy. The "wife" section contained the usual variety: some funny ones, some of those I-know-I-don't-say-it-often-enough

ones, some whose wording was so generic that you wonder who would ever choose them, a few religious ones, and so on. I selected the one that best expressed my feelings, and I was about to leave satisfied when my eye caught that card. It was located in the slot just above the religious ones. Its title was "Wife to Wife."

It was a sobering moment. That card, just by its presence (I didn't read it), expresses our society's approval of the worst kind of conduct. In many ways, sin is sin; one is no worse than another. On the other hand, when the Apostle Paul described a world that turned its back on God, which in turn prompted God to remove restraint and let it go its way, homosexuality epitomized the world's godlessness. "Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them"

(Romans 1:24). "For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the man abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error" (vv. 26-27). Jude called it "gross immorality" (Jude 7). And make no mistake, despite societal approval and the bold assertions of church leaders who defend it, homosexuals "will not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

That card expresses something else: what a challenge godly mothers now face. Moms and dads who bring up their children "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" are going to have to teach them better than what they will learn at school or by listening to the news or by watching television or by reading what legislators and courts decide. That will take constant reinforcement. It will take courage because we are labeled as narrow, bigoted, even hateful, just for opposing what God's word plainly says is sin. It may even call for taking a stand against a family member.

That card also reminds us of our opportunity to enlighten those walking in darkness and invite them into Jesus' light. People can change. After denouncing homosexuality, drunkenness, and other sins, Paul reminded the Corinthians, "Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11). ■

“Wisdom Is Vindicated By All Her Children”

by Frank Himmel

Our title is a statement Jesus made, recorded in Luke 7:35, with a slightly different wording in Matthew 11:19: “wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.” What does it mean?

Wisdom

Wisdom is frequently personified in Scripture, often as a parent. The essays in the opening chapters of Proverbs especially employ that picture. This wisdom is the expression of God’s mind: “Then you will discern the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 4:5-6). Our text is literally “the wisdom.”



Wisdom’s Children

If wisdom is a parent, children are to be expected. Just the “sons of wickedness” are wicked people (2 Samuel 7:10), and the “sons of pride” are the proud (Job 41:34), and the “children of rebellion, offspring of deceit” are rebellious liars (Isaiah 57:4), so wisdom’s children are those who are wise. Wisdom’s children are those who listen to God’s wisdom and act on it.

Context

Jesus had just highly commended John the Baptist, whose work was to prepare the way for the Lord. While many had hearkened to John’s preaching, some, especially among Israel’s leaders, had not. They chided John because of his austere lifestyle, one which doubtless looked extremist. “For John the Baptist came eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon’” (Luke 7:33).

Jesus’ approach was different, yet He had no greater success with this crowd. “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’” (Luke 7:34).

Lesson

John and Jesus were especially the children of wisdom. The success of both these messengers vindicated the wisdom of their respective approaches, even though opposites; the “deeds” of wisdom as Matthew put it.

Jesus’ point was likely broader. Because the critics were determined to reject God’s message, nothing His messengers did was acceptable. Those who were open to God’s wisdom were receptive to both John and Jesus, each in their respective roles. Any time one acts on their teaching he is vindicating divine wisdom.

Now, let’s each ask, Might I be called wisdom’s child? ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday	Wednesday
GREETER	Adam Gibson	Greg Winget
SONG LEADER	Bruce Williams	Carlos Garcia
OPENING PRAYER	Clifton Lefort	
LORD’S SUPPER		
BREAD	Steven Turner	
CUP	John Baucom	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	David Gray	
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Singing
CLOSING PRAYER	Kerry Gray	TBD