

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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WISE. The biblical book “Proverbs” has been described as “*words of the WISE*” and “*The Proverbs of Solomon*.” Two translations of Proverbs 31:10 are: “*A capable wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels*” (NRSV). “*A competent wife, how does one find her? Her value is far above pearls*.” (CEB). Interestingly, Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines, many for stabilizing the new monarchy by uniting various families under Solomon’s rule. Solomon is known as the *WISEST* king of the Hebrew people, yet the wives from other religious traditions led Solomon away from firm loyalty to the one God of the Hebrews.

Competent. Capable. Concerned about others. Speaks kindness. Strength. Dignity. These words are not exclusively about wives but should describe all of us. From the book of James, the question is asked, “*Who is WISE and understanding among you?*” (3:13 NRSV) Or, “*Are any of you WISE and understanding?*” (3:13, CEB). Both Proverbs and James imply that *WISE* people are known by their words and deeds that are reflections/actions of God’s love in and through them. James writes, “*What of wisdom from above? First, it is pure, and then peaceful, gentle, obedient, filled with mercy and good actions, fair, and genuine.*” (3:17).

We continue to live in turbulent times fueled by mistrust, selfishness, jealousy and uncertain about today and the future. Some people have devious motivations to discredit the truth for their own edification, “*...jealous for something you can’t get, so you struggle and fight.*” (James 4:2, CEB). Even Jesus’ Twelve were “*debating among themselves who was the greatest.*” (Mark 9:34).

Heidelberg University Chaplain Paul Sittason Stark commented that Christians are “*Trying to find the calm—wherever we are.*” God calls each one of us to be *WISE*, competent and capable to be beacons of hope in a world that is exploding apart. *WISE* words encourage us: “*strength and honor are her (our) clothing; she is (we are) confident about the future.*” (Proverbs 31:25). We have confidence in God’s future, have trust as resurrection people of faith, assured that Christ is our “*calm,*” and are spirit-filled as God’s people forever. God grant us wisdom to be *WISE* and humble. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS*.