

**Lady Wisdom – Part 1**  
**Proverbs 9**  
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**Main Idea:** The choice between wisdom and folly is a choice between life and death.

**Key Points:**

**1. What We Learn from Lady Wisdom**

- a. Wisdom meets us in the marketplace of daily life (1:20-21). Wisdom calls out in the streets—where we live and make decisions. Wisdom isn't just an intellectual concern. Skillful living is for everyday life at work and home.
- b. Wisdom is beautiful and desirable (3:13-15). Wisdom is better than gold and beautiful gems. Wisdom is something we should feel attracted to.
- c. Wisdom is like a close relationship (9:5). We are invited to enter her home and eat with her—to share a meal is a sign of deep relationship and closeness.
- d. Wisdom has to be cultivated (1:24-32; 4:5-6). We can't merely be an acquaintance of wisdom—we must pursue, treasure and prize her highly.
- e. Wisdom has to be chosen instead of folly (9:1-18).

**2. Lady Wisdom vs. Woman Folly**

- a. Their audience. Both invite “whoever is simple” to turn in. Both have houses in the highest place in town. In other words, they are competing for the same clientele. The simple are those who are still being formed and shaped. The simple are still trying to decide who to follow – lady wisdom or woman folly.
- b. Their activity. There seems to be a difference between the activity of the two women that gives a hint to their character. Wisdom is portrayed as working, preparing and making ready. She has built her home, slaughtered her beasts, mixed her wine, set her table, sent out her staff...it's a picture of diligent preparation and industry. Folly “sits at her door of her house.” She seems to be lounging, living a life of ease.
- c. Their invitations. At first glance, it appears that their invitations are exactly the same. But notice what we're told about folly: she calls those who are going “straight on their way” (vs. 15). Folly calls us away from faithfulness. Wisdom, on the other hand, calls travelers to “leave their simple ways” (vs. 6). There is a call to change, to repentance. Entering the house of wisdom involves a willingness to leave behind simpleness

and walk in the ways of insight. Folly doesn't ask for any sort of change. Folly is easy. It doesn't ask us to think more carefully. There's no repentance.

- d. Their meals. Both wisdom and folly offer a meal. But the menu is very different. Wisdom lays out a banquet that is the result of her diligent work and preparation. It's a rich meal that communicates the goodness of wisdom. But folly calls us to delight in the forbidden, which could be a reference to sexual immorality. The basic lie of folly, the basic principle of sin, is to entice us with the forbidden. This is what drives the lust of so many: they want what is off-limits. They want what isn't theirs.
- e. Their outcomes. Wisdom offers life; folly leads to death. Verse 6 says, "leave your simple ways, and live..." Verse 18 says of folly's house, "But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol."
  - i. You see this pattern throughout Proverbs—folly always offers instant pleasure, like sinful sexual gratification or quick money through violence or stealing. Beyond the immediate payoff is always a hidden outcome. Folly leads to death.

### 3. This Week's Memory Verses: Proverbs 9:9-10

#### **Fellowship Starters:**

1. Josh taught us that wisdom has to be cultivated (Prov. 1:24-32; 4:5-6). What one or two things can you do to cultivate wisdom?
2. Josh taught that wisdom is beautiful and desirable (Prov. 3:13-15). Are you delighting yourself in the Lord? Is the Lord satisfying to you? Or do find that you lack delight in the things of God?
3. The invitation of Woman Folly is to those going "straight on their way" to forsake faithfulness (Prov. 9:15). Are there any areas in your life (home, work, among friends, etc.) in which you have strayed from faithfulness? What would repentance look like?
4. The rich meal of Lady Wisdom communicates the goodness of wisdom (Prov. 9: 2-5). The meal of Woman Folly calls us to delight in the forbidden, like sexual immorality or quick money through dishonesty (Prov. 9:17). Are you enjoying any of the forbidden meal of Woman Folly? If so, what can you do you do to repent and bring this into the light?
5. Proverbs 9 teaches us that "the choice between wisdom and folly is a choice between life and death." As you look back over the last several months of your life, which direction would your choices reflect – wisdom or folly? If folly, what would change look like?