

11. Juli 2020

**“The acquisition of wisdom”
St. Benedikt**

Prov 2,1-9

My child, if you take my words to heart, if you set store by my commandments, tuning your ear to wisdom, tuning your heart to understanding, yes, if your plea is for clear perception, if you cry out for understanding, if you look for it as though for silver, search for it as though for buried treasure, then you will understand what the fear of Yahweh is, and discover the knowledge of God. For Yahweh himself is giver of wisdom, from his mouth issue knowledge and understanding. He reserves his advice for the honest, a shield to those whose ways are sound; he stands guard over the paths of equity, he keeps watch over the way of those faithful to him. Then you will understand uprightness, equity and fair dealing, the paths that lead to happiness.

Today, on St. Benedict's Day of Remembrance, we are made aware of something very important which is in danger of being lost more and more in our time and which can only be replaced very inadequately. It is the wisdom that is called "tasty wisdom"

It is a gift of the Holy Spirit. It should not be confused with the knowledge that is acquired as natural light through the effort of our intellect. Wisdom, on the other hand, is the influx of the supernatural light of God into our mind and heart! Thus the tasty knowledge, the wisdom, refers to God Himself and not primarily to the knowledge of His works.

As we hear through today's text, we can gain wisdom if we delve into the Word of God and accept it in our heart, for the Word of God is a light on our paths (*cf. Sal 119,105*). Since it comes from God Himself - even if it is mediated through people - it enlightens us and gives us insight into the wisdom of God. The Word forms us when we let it in, and we learn to follow it.

We can imagine it like this: the supernatural light of the Lord is in the Word that we receive. It penetrates us according to the willingness of our reception, and now spreads its light. Our minds and hearts are touched by this light and transformed by it. If we receive the Word of the Lord very deeply, it remains in us as a treasure

and enlightens us permanently. The Spirit of God always reminds us of this Word when a situation arises that is illuminated by the respective Word of God.

A concrete example: *“Remember this, my dear brothers: everyone should be quick to listen but slow to speak and slow to human anger” (Jas 1,19)*

When we take this word deeply, we change our behaviour according to the word! If, for example, we are in danger of speaking thoughtlessly, have the habit of easily falling into the word of other people, i.e. are impatient in listening, then the Word of God reminds us what the right behaviour is like. However, it is not only a reminder and thus linked to the admonition to correct our behavior, but also from the depth of the Word of God the power will flow to us to change our behavior according to the Word of God. Of course, this also includes the insight that the Word of God shows us the right path and that we want to let ourselves be corrected and formed by it.

As in this example, there are innumerable situations which are illuminated by the Word of God and the more we hear and follow the Word of God, the more wisdom grows!

Saint Benedict, who is considered the father of Western monasticism, left a rule for his monks to help them live the wisdom of God in their lives. His Rule is preceded by the word: "Listen, my son, listen", thus reminding us that the acquisition of wisdom is preceded by listening. This should not be an occasional attitude, but should permeate our whole life. It is precisely in relation to God that we are always the ones who receive; and if our attention is focused on God and our aspiration is to deepen what we have received, then those fruits will grow in our lives which are prepared for us by God!