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## **Seek Wisdom and Prudence, The True Treasures**

### **St. Bernard of Clairvaux**



*In this excerpt from a sermon on Proverbs by St. Bernard of Clairvaux (Sermo de diversis 15: PL 183, 577-579), wisdom is extolled as a hidden treasure and prudence as honey which delights the heart. Bernard himself came to be known as the "Mellifluous Doctor," meaning the one from whose lips the wisdom of God flowed like honey. This selection is used in the Roman Catholic Office of Readings for Monday of the Sixth week in ordinary time, with the accompanying biblical reading being taken from Proverbs 3:1-20.*

Let us work for the food which does not perish – our salvation. Let us work in the vineyard of the Lord to earn our daily wage in the wisdom which says: *Those who work in me will not sin.* Christ tells us: *The field is the world.* Let us work in it and dig up wisdom, its hidden treasure, a treasure we all look for and want to obtain.

*If you are looking for it, really look. Be converted and come. Converted from what? From your own wilfulness. "But", you may say, "if I do not find wisdom in my own will, where shall I find it? My soul eagerly desires it. And I will not be satisfied when I find it, if it is not a generous amount, a full measure, overflowing into my hands". You are right, for blessed is the man who finds wisdom and is full of prudence.*

Look for wisdom while it can still be found. Call for it while it is near. Do you want to know how near it is? *The word is near you, in your heart and on your lips,* provided that you seek it honestly. Insofar as you find wisdom in your heart, prudence will flow from your lips, but be careful that it flows from and not away from them, or that you do not vomit it up. If you have found wisdom, you have found honey. But do not eat so much that you become too full and bring it all up.

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Eat so that you are always hungry. Wisdom says: *Those who eat me continue to hunger.* Do not think you have too much of it, but do not eat too much or you will throw it up. If you do, what you seem to have will be taken away from you, because you gave up searching too soon. While wisdom is near and while it can be found, look for it and ask for its help. Solomon says: *A man who eats too much honey does himself no good; similarly, the man who seeks his own glorification will be crushed by that same renown.*

*Happy is the man who has found wisdom.* Even more happy is the man *who lives in wisdom,* for he perceives its abundance. There are three ways for wisdom or prudence to abound in you: if you confess your sins, if you give thanks and praise, and if your speech is edifying. *Man believes with his heart and so he is justified. He confesses with his lips and so he is saved. In the beginning of his speech the just man is his own accuser,* next he gives glory to God, and thirdly, if his wisdom extends that far, he edifies his neighbor.

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### **Personal Prayer: Pathway to Joy**

*Marcellino D'Ambrosio, Ph.D.*



Everyone knows that personal prayer is important. You can't expect to deepen a relationship with God talking with Him only once a week! But how, in the midst of the busy, noisy life we all lead, can we develop a pattern of daily prayer that really works? And if we are successful in carving out some moments for prayer, what do we do? How should we spend that time in way that would be most fruitful?

Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio has taught spiritual theology academically, but, more importantly, he's had plenty of practice applying that tradition to everyday life. With a family of seven, a business, and a non-profit corporation to run, he knows the challenges that a busy, active life can pose to the Christian who wants to pray. In this talk, he lays down principles and gives practical suggestions on how busy laypeople can develop a prayer life that leads to joy and personal transformation.

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