

A LETTER FROM DR. SEAN LUCAS

September 19, 2019

My dear Friends:

I've had an interesting juxtaposition of reading over this past week. A friend of mine recommended Krista Tippett's book *Becoming Wise* to me. Tippett is the host of NPR's show *On Being* and is a top-flight interviewer, one who has talked with a remarkable range of individuals over the past fifteen years or so. Her book is a meditation on how to live life in this world. And she suggests that wisdom is necessary to live life well. Yet the question comes, "Where do we find wisdom?" Tippett's answer: "We have it in us to become wise." If we pay attention to mystery while being open to the advances of science, if we continue to embrace the evolutionary process and hold on to faith broadly considered, we will learn wisdom.

In my morning worship, my Bible reading plan has me in Job. Just yesterday, I read the central chapter in the entire book, chapter 28; twice, Job asks "Where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell?" (28:12, 20). Job's observation is that it is hidden from us—no matter how much we search for it, whether in ourselves or in our world, we can't find it. Only God knows the way to wisdom: "And he said to the human race, 'The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding'" (28:28). Even (especially) in the midst of tremendous suffering, wisdom is not found within, but outside of us. The Lord is wisdom: living life with God in our sights knowing that we are in his sights is the way to wisdom.

How different these two perspectives are! Wisdom is found within us, we will evolve to become wise, science will show us the way; or wisdom is found outside of us, God must grant us wisdom, living coram deo is the way. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are committed to the latter understanding of wisdom: and yet how often is it the case that we functionally live as though wisdom is within us. We rationalize and justify by telling ourselves, "Well, it just felt right." Or we refuse all counsel in our headlong pursuit of whatever it is. Or we resist repentance because we can't be wrong—our own wisdom is the way forward.

God's Word tells us that Tippett's understanding of wisdom is actually folly. True wisdom is found by looking to God, his Word, his voice; by turning from our sin and resting in him; by trusting that he is the true King of the world. How do we become wise? The fear of the Lord.

In the grip of God's grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.