

**The Wisdom of World  
Communion Sunday**  
October 6, 2024

*Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn her pillars.  
She has slaughtered her animals,  
she has mixed her wine,  
she has also set her table.  
She has sent out her servant-girls,  
she calls from the highest places in the town,  
"You that are simple, turn in here!"  
To those without sense she says,  
"Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed.  
Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight."*

-Proverbs 9:1-6



It is not uncommon for folks like us to become more interested in gaining wisdom as we age. For a definition of wisdom let's hear from gerontologist, Carolyn Aldwin who says, "Wisdom is a practice that reflects the developmental process by which individuals increase in self-knowledge, self-integration, non attachment, self-transcendence, and compassion...as well as a deeper understanding of life."

Diana Butler-Bass picks up this line of thought by saying, "When it comes to wisdom, time is everything. You can't be impatient with it. It is a practice

and a process. Wisdom can't be seized. It takes time." And, then she goes on to compare the acquisition of wisdom to bread and wine.

Baking bread and creating wine also take time. They are both fermented foods that slowly transform one thing into another. When a leavening agent is added to water and flour it becomes dough that bakes into bread. When yeast consumes the sugar in grape juice it ferments the fruit and turns into wine. Wheat and fruit are both broken down through fermentation and turned into bread and wine.

This process takes time. The bread must be kneaded, left to rise, kneaded a second time, left to rise once more, and then baked. Wine is the result of weeks, months, or years of fermentation and aging. This process cannot be rushed. Wisdom is like that. It begins as something else...an experience of joy or sadness, a new insight or correction, living with good choices and bad choices...but when some agent, like the Spirit is introduced these original ingredients are transformed into wisdom.

In John 6:51 Jesus says, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." Fermented foods like bread and wine are alive. Fermentation actually slows the process of decay and extends the life of the food. Once the process of fermentation begins it just keeps going. You can't stop it. Bread can mold and wine can turn to vinegar but that's because both are living growing, organic things.

Of course since bread and wine are living things, they are perfect correlations to body and blood. Yes, it's a miracle but it is also an ordinary and everyday fort of miracle. Living bread and living wine are the source of our very lives and, so is wisdom. Like bread and wine wisdom grows and keeps growing. Once the process begins it takes on a life of its own...changing us, transforming us. We become different, leavened with insight and self-knowledge that lasts. Bread and wine offer their life so that we might be nourished and live. Wisdom offers its life that we may live a yeasty life, fermented by the Spirit. Jesus gave of his life so that we too might live.

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and drink of the wine I have mixed.  
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in the way of insight."*

Peace,  
Pastor Paul

