

### Homily for March 31 2017

There is in the Old Testament a collection of writings called The Wisdom Literature. These writings offer practical council that helps to direct how we live our lives each and every day. One of the pictures this collection of writings presents to us is that of life as a journey. On this journey are two types of people. The first type of person the Wisdom writers term a fool because this person thinks the road of life is going nowhere and to no one. Life is aimless, directionless and has no ultimate destination. The second type of person the Wisdom writers term a wise man because this person thinks the road is life is going somewhere and to someone. Life has an aim, a direction and an ultimate destination.

Now how we think about life effects the way we live life. St. Paul in 1 Corinthians summarized the philosophy of the fool this way:

***“We eat, we drink, the next day we die,” and that’s all there is to it***

Such an attitude concludes that life doesn’t really have any deeper meaning than making it through the decades allotted to us with the most comfort and luxury and then it is over.

The wise person recognizes there is so much more to life than just eating and drinking. Such a person takes to heart the words we heard Jesus say in today’s gospel when he declared to a group of people who did not trust and believe that he was the Messiah:

***I have not come on my own. But the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him. 29 I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me.”***

In these two sentences, Jesus gives us a clear understanding of life’s aim, life’s direction and its ultimate destination. Life’s aim is to know Jesus and the truth of his word. Therefore, life’s direction is meant to bring us into an ever closer relationship with Jesus so that in the end, our ultimate destination will allow us to experience what it means to be united with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The very One from whom Jesus so clearly says he came.

Two ways to understand life’s journey: People embrace one or other of these two understandings

The First Lesson we heard today from the Wisdom of Solomon presents to us the perspective of the fool who says: “life is aimless, directionless and has no ultimate destination.”

Listen again to not only their outlook on life. Listen also to their contempt for the wise person who believes life has an aim, a direction and an ultimate destination.

In the first verse the fool’s philosophy of life is expressed in these words:

***“Short and sorrowful is our life,  
and there is no remedy when a life comes to its end,***

Now here is what I want you to hear. Although this is their outlook on life the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon says of this philosophy:

***for they reasoned unsoundly, saying to themselves,  
“Short and sorrowful is our life,  
and there is no remedy when a man comes to his end,***

The fool is also wrong in his or her assessment of the wise man of whom they derisively speaks;

***12 “Let us lie in wait for the righteous man,  
13 He professes to have knowledge of God,  
and calls himself a child of the Lord.  
He calls the last end of the righteous happy,  
and boasts that God is his father.***

Here is the mocking attitude of the fool which then leads the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon to conclude:

***21 Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray,  
for their wickedness blinded them, 22 and they did not know the secret purposes of God,  
nor hope for the wages of holiness,  
nor discern the prize for blameless souls;***

Here we are told that if people long enough believe that life is aimless and without purpose they become blinded to the purposes of God and so have not idea that there is the prize for the wise that awaits us at the end of this life.

Today we live in a spiritual environment where there are more atheists than ever before, although they are still very much in the minority. According to Canadian census numbers from the 2001 and 2011 census forms those who are irreligious grew from 16.2% to 23.9% of the adult population, an increase of 7.7 percent in ten years. Outside of BC and the Yukon Alberta has the highest number in this category; 23.1% - 31.6%.<sup>1</sup>

The point I want to leave you with is that while many of our contemporaries would not be as extreme as those described in Wisdom, there is a spirit prevalent today where the let's eat, drink and be merry dictum is the creed of many. May we be a people whose lives witness to a greater purpose and meaning because we know life has an aim, a direction and an ultimate destination. May we always be receptive to seek out those who are irreligious into the fellowship of Jesus' family so they can discover that the wages of holiness pay a far greater dividend than the fleeting pleasures of this world,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irreligion\\_in\\_Canada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irreligion_in_Canada)

