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by Pat Marrin

[View Author Profile](#)

patrickjmarrin@gmail.com.

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“Behold, the kingdom of God is among you” (Luke 17:22).

The complexity of our current political moment is compounded by deeper issues and questions regarding the nature of truth itself. What is truth, and who is telling the truth? Are there only partisan versions of the truth, subjective perceptions slanted this way or that, but beyond any conclusive determination or objective judgment?

Our intense media culture mirrors our dilemmas, forming, then measuring public opinion with polling, demographic profiling and feedback. The results are applied to events and facts not in themselves but as interpretations vying for general acceptance as the only standard we have — what the majority believes to be real, or not.

One cannot read the exquisite description of Wisdom found in today’s first reading without realizing that discernment of the truth is what reveals the presence of God within creation and human consciousness. The author piles on adjective and after adjective to approach Wisdom: “a spirit intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, unstained, certain, not baneful, loving the good, keen, unhampered, beneficent, kindly, firm, secure, tranquil, all-seeing, all-powerful.”

Wisdom is given gender, the “feminine genius” of God, “a pure effulgence of the glory of the Almighty.” The message is that without Wisdom the human mind is blind and reduced to a coarse apprehension of reality, a crude grasp of the depth and beauty of the invisible Spirit that animates everything. What is human success or power compared to a love relationship with Lady Wisdom, who shares with her friends the inner secrets and delights of communing with God?

Jesus alludes to this kind of priceless intuition when he tells the Pharisees, who were supposed to be wise, that they haven't clue about the Kingdom of God, the invisible workings of the Spirit in the world. They claim to know God, Jesus says, but they fail to see that God is already present among them. He then warns his disciples not to be fooled by charlatans who claim to know God's mysteries. Like lightning illuminating the sky, God's plan will be revealed, but not before his Servant suffers and is rejected.

Wisdom is something that is given to those who pray for it. It cannot be seized or hurried. It is a pure gift that comes to us when we rest in God's presence and wait patiently for the insights that come in friendship, as between lovers who listen and inhabit each other in silence and perfect openness. God dwells in the space we make for the Holy Spirit, and in the welcome we show to others in need of our love. The Kingdom of God reveals itself when we surrender our mind, heart, soul and strength to Lady Wisdom.

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