

## **Monday Evening Bible Reading Group: Notes Continued**

### **Monday 4 March: Ecclesiasticus 4.11 – 5.7 (Note correction to original 6.7) Host Toyin,**

**Lead David:** A lyrical hymn to Wisdom. Interesting that in a male dominated culture Wisdom is characterised as female. I wonder why? Note the contrast between reluctant obedience and joyful obedience: nothing worse than the miserably virtuous for discouraging virtue in others. Wisdom morphs into the Christian Holy Spirit. The section on modesty and speaking out is interesting: balance is hard to get right: never speaking up not good, never shutting up not good. Politicians have a hard time balancing personal conviction, public/media opinion, and party loyalty. In all generations, you get that self-indulgent sense of entitlement: I want, therefore I must have. Excusable in a small child. Very irritating in a teenager or adult or oldie. Do we trade too much on God's infinite forgiveness? Echoes of Proverbs here: e.g. "A dog returns to its vomit".

**Monday 11 March: Ecclesiasticus Chapter 5.8 – 6.1: Host Toyin, Lead Sophie:** Watch your tongue!!!! Which of us has not wanted to un-say something we have said: either in the heat of the moment, or to be funny, or because we didn't realise X could hear us, or (and particularly these days) because what we have said spreads? Even genuinely clever is not necessarily genuinely wise. Holding your tongue can be extremely difficult as well as physically challenging! Journalists just hate "No Comment". How do we reconcile keeping our word with changing our mind?

**Monday 18 March: Chapter 6: 2-37: Host Toyin, Lead Evan:** Blind passion. True friendship. The search for wisdom. Sorting blind passion from strong feeling. The word "Blind" is key: we can blind ourselves. On a recent "Any Answers" an English man was very angry that Russians were being accused of massacres in Ukraine, when all they were trying to do was rescue Russians from Ukrainian Nazis. The Friendship advice is fascinating. Is it all sound? In this Facebook age, what is friendship? Can we be friends with "very different" people? Are there essential differences between male/male, and female/female, and female/male friendships? What about age differences? How do we acquire wisdom? (Wisdom not cleverness.) Can we do anything about our children's friendships, or just pray?