

Six Ways to Avoid Being a Fool

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[0 : 00] If you are unaware, we are back in Ephesians 5, so please take out your Bibles, Ephesians 5, as we work our way through this incredible text. We are, as you know, kind of in the tail end of this incredible book.

In this book, we find Paul explaining to the saints about the wonderful work of the Trinity in salvation. The significance of salvation for our lives.

That we are a new people. People that he now calls us saints. That we are a church. We are no longer called sinners.

We are no longer called enemies. We are no longer strangers. But we are ultimately children of his. With this new identity, we have a new purpose.

New responsibilities. Many people struggle to determine what is the purpose of their life. But Jesus and the pages of Scripture make it very clear.

[1 : 09] As Jesus Christ was about the glory of his Father, so are we to be out for the glory of our Father. As the Westminster Catechism sums it up so succinctly, man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

Amen? It's to enjoy him. To know him.

He's not a God to be feared. He's not a God to run from. Just as we heard in Psalm 103. Oh, bless the Lord.

Now, what is sometimes easy to lose when we get into the book of Ephesians is sometimes we over-personalize the teaching. And what I mean by that is we tend to think that Paul is teaching to us as individuals.

But we lose track of the fact that he's actually teaching to a church. It's a group of individuals who are all responsible for that teaching.

[2 : 27] Right? It's we all have. By definition, we are all children of Christ. We all have the same identity. And we all have the same purpose.

So sometimes it's easy to say, am I living to the glory of God? But sometimes it's different to open up my eyes and look around and say, are we living to the glory of God?

And then we have to start understanding what is my role in the gathered assembly of the saints to bring glory to him?

Last week, Paul called us to walk in the light. Walk in light. And it's a very simple passage for us to understand individually.

But it was a command for the church that there are churches at times can walk outside of that light.

[3 : 32] One of my friends used this analogy several years ago. And I elected not to use it last week. But I thought it was a really interesting analogy that he brought.

He says, the light isn't a spotlight. He said, you want to think about it as if you just got this light, it's like whether it be a candle or a flashlight. And sometimes in the darkness, when you're alone, maybe in the forest or just in the dark at night, that light just doesn't feel so bright.

You can see it. It kind of helps you a couple of feet in front of you. But as I kind of tagged on last week, sometimes we believe our role as believers is to expose the lives and sin of those people around us.

And Paul wasn't calling for that. Paul was calling for us to live in such a way that the life and how we live our life would expose non-believers.

But he used this idea. He says, think of a city on a hill. And as you start to bring the people who have light to that top of that city, what happens to that city?

[4 : 42] It gets brighter, right? As more and more lights come together, the analogy starts to form that that city, that group of believers, that church's light gets brighter.

And then as that light gets brighter, the collective witness gets stronger. And those in darkness, hey, what's in that light?

What's going on on that hill? That's the reason why Jesus Christ uses these analogies. We don't hide our light under a bushel. We do. That's why we have light on a hill, so that those in darkness can see it and be drawn to it.

So how we live collectively draws people to him, draws people that are lost, people that are dark, people that are enslaved.

And the reality is, if you think about our church, if we do not gather our light together in the appropriate way, what kind of influence are we going to have in this dark culture?

[5 : 55] Very rarely can an individual have that kind of influence. To take the teaching that I am preaching into internalizing it and not actually see it as connecting to each and every one of us really doesn't accomplish much.

So this is, does that change your paradigm a little bit about how you're seeing these passages? I think these are one of the most, I don't want to say wrongly taught, but sometimes we put the wrong emphasis on the teaching of us as individuals as opposed to thinking of us as a member of one another.

How does that work? So this morning I want us to take a look at Ephesians 5, and we're going to be in verses 15 to 17. And I want you to keep this in your mind.

The idea that how we function as a group, that we have been saved by works, we walk together in light, we walk together in love, and we are seeking God's wisdom.

Pretty clear-cut verse that Paul introduces to us. Notice it says, look carefully, then how you walk. We talked about walk earlier, how you conduct your life.

[7 : 18] Not as unwise, but as wise. Making the best use of the time because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Here we see Paul once again making a contrast. If you remember the beginning of chapter 5, he makes a contrast between walking in love, but he does it in such a way that you can actually walk for your own self-interest or the self-interest of the world, right?

Seek to serve your own bodily, fleshly pleasures, or you can actually seek to serve others. You can either choose to walk in light or darkness. We're seeing wisdom in foolishness.

And next week, we're going to look at what does it look like to walk in the spirit as opposed to the flesh. So he's using these strong contrasts to compare. So today, I want to answer a very simple question.

And I'm sure it's a question that many of you have asked at one time or another, or maybe you needed to. And the question is, why am I so foolish?

[8 : 39] Why am I so foolish? Or to put it in a more non-threatening term, why am I so unwise? You ever ask that or is that just me?

In the middle of a thought or an action or activity or a phase of my life, I can step back and I'm like, what in the world was I thinking? So today, I want to answer why that happens in our lives.

Why do we get into this place? As Paul is going to be teaching us about wisdom, I want us to, I'm going to, in the end, answer, why are we so foolish? Because we understand we are sometimes prone to sin.

We're prone to darkness. We're prone to flesh. We're prone to seek our own selfish desires as opposed to loving others the way we want to.

Now, maybe I'm the only one here that has ever asked that question. But I'm going to bet maybe one or two of you have asked yourselves that question.

[9 : 53] What in the world was I thinking? So let's take a look at the passage again here today. Look carefully then how you walk. Not as unwise, but as wise.

Making the best use of the time because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. You see, the question that I asked you is a legitimate question.

The reason that this is a legitimate question is because we're now at chapter five and a half of a six-chapter book.

And Paul is bringing this to our attention. It's not some like off-the-cuff word. He didn't talk about it earlier. But he's kind of bringing it down later in the book.

And he needs and he feels the need to tell us something very specific. We're going to look at four positives and two negatives. The four positives are look carefully then how you walk.

[10:58] Walk as a wise person. Make the best use of your time and understand what the will of the Lord is. He has these two negatives.

Do not walk as unwise. Do not be foolish. Why does he teach this?

Because he ultimately knows that we are foolish people. There's going to be times in our life, well, we just spurn wisdom.

So maybe this morning you want to walk in wisdom. You want a life that is known to be a life of wisdom. You do not want to be foolish.

Then perhaps this sermon will be for you. So this morning I want to share with you six ways to avoid being the fool. Six ways to avoid being the fool.

[12:02] So before I do that, I need to define for you both what Paul means by wisdom and what Paul means by foolishness here. So when I say the word wisdom, how many of you guys think of Solomon?

Solomon's wisdom, right? Right thinking, how to do trade properly, how to negotiate into foreign matters.

And if you're not familiar with Solomon, Solomon was David's son. And in 1 Kings 3, David has passed away. And Solomon has God appears to him.

And 1 Kings 3 tells us that Solomon loved the Lord. And he walked in the statutes of David, his father.

And while he was making sacrifices to God, God appears to Solomon. And he says basically, what shall I give you? And Solomon answers, give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern people that I may discern between good and evil.

[13:11] And in verse 12, the Lord answers Solomon, behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind. So that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.

That is why we call Solomon the wisest man who ever lived. This is how we see wisdom. We see wisdom as having wisdom, a wise and discerning mind.

Someone who is capable of making incredible decisions even in the face of a lot of information. Who wouldn't want that kind of wisdom, right?

No matter what job we do, we're always faced with someone who's a little bit smarter and wise. A problem comes up and you're like, man, I wish I could be like that person. Now when we read or hear that word fool, we think of the exact opposite of Solomon, right?

We talk about someone who, when life comes up, no matter what the circumstances are, they just seem to make the wrong decision at every time.

[14:22] They make the wrong decisions in relationships. They make the wrong decisions at work, within their marriage life, finances, and just regular life in general.

When you read Proverbs, it talks about the type of information that makes you wise and the information that makes you foolish. I remember just spending a summer at camp and I think I met what we called the most foolish person in the world.

We used to call him sense because he seemed to lack all common sense. And the problem was, when we lived at camp, we had a cabin up in the bush. There's eight guys, eight guys over the week collect a lot of junk.

We all, of course, bring our food in, we're eating. And every Thursday morning when the garbage comes out, you're supposed to put it in a can in a locked up area. He was in charge of garbage. What would he do?

He'd leave the garbage on the deck. So pretty much on Tuesday mornings when we were trying to get to our camp activities, we couldn't. Why? Because there would always be a bear sitting down on our balcony, chomping away, right?

[15:35] And this was before the days of cell phones and wonderful things like sat phones. So finally someone at one of our activities would go, hey, where's BK? Where's Bryn?

Where's George? Where's all those guys? Oh, yeah. Sense probably forgot to put the garbage away. And it was something that happened all the time, right? There's just some people, that's kind of how they are.

But this isn't how the pages of Scripture describe what a fool is. Psalm 14.1 says, the fool says in his heart, there is no God.

The fool says in his heart, there is no God. The fool is the one who chooses to live apart from God. This fool can fool us sometimes because they give lip service to God, but their lives, in actuality fact, live in such a way that God is not included in any decision.

[16:39] The supreme fool would be the one who is anti-God both with their thinking and their living. And we all know that through the teaching of Ephesians, the gospel was not for wise people, but the gospel's for humble people.

Last week, we learned that a person was blind to themselves, to their sin, and to God. Romans 1.21 says, For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him. But they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fool. See, wisdom is to know God, to fear God.

Foolishness is defined here, is to act as if God doesn't exist. 1 Corinthians 2.14 says, A natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him.

And he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. You see, what's amazing in this dichotomy is that man actually thinks he is wise, living outside of God.

[18:08] And he invents a whole bunch of sort of things in order to placate his spirit. Because we all have a spirit. And that spirit needs to worship.

So what it does is it creates God. Man will actually generate gods to worship. They will create them out of stone, wood.

They will post them up. They will begin to value judgments. Their God will become their form of authority, their form of judging everyone else.

It gets to a point that even Solomon says in Proverbs 12.15, The way of a fool is right in his own eyes.

So we go to wisdom. We see that wisdom is discernment. And everything at the root of discernment is the understanding that occurs from Proverbs 1.7.

[19:14] The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Everything, every ounce of wisdom and knowledge of this world must begin with God. In the Bible, wisdom is centered in conviction, in behavior.

What I believe, I act. Specifically, recognizing and obeying God. So this text actually gives us three characteristics of a wise man.

Let's take a look. The first one. A wise man walks in who they are. It's like you've been given a job. Your dad is the king. You're the prince. Your role is to continue the function of your father.

You know who you are and you understand. That word, look carefully. It means to pay attention. It is to make sure your life, your purposes are about God's purposes.

So this is something that a wise person does. Whether it be buying a car or getting married and who they choose to marry.

[20:23] What type of career. They actually look back and figure out how does this glorify God. How do I live for this purpose in this action?

A wise person walks in love and humility. A wise person walks with others in unity. A wise person does not partner with the world.

But keeps themselves separate so that they're not stained by the world. We learned this last week.

A wise person walks as a child of light holding to what is good, what is right, and what is true.

It's to be who we are simply, right? Child of God. One of the funniest things that I remember in high school. You guys don't know this. I'm dating myself. Yes, I know. Do you remember when Ralph Lauren was a really big thing in high school?

Everybody had to have a Ralph Lauren shirt, little horsey pony. And people could spot the fakes that they bought at Zeller's or Kmart's, right? The guy just didn't look right. So one guy at my high school was quite ingenious.

[21:40] He wanted to fit in with the rich kids. So he'd buy Ralph Lauren socks and he would cut the pony out of the socks and then sew it on his whatever shirt.

So that was his way. Quite ingenious, but it really wasn't the same product. But he desperately wanted to belong. It's like the guy who wants to belong into a social group but spends money he does not have, needs to live in the right neighborhood but does not have the money to do it.

See, a wise person, as stated last week, doesn't float into wisdom any more than he does holiness. A wise person makes wise decisions because he knows they are wise things.

So there's an action that is involved. All right, the second characteristic of a wise person. A wise person makes the most of their time knowing the day.

Look at verse 16. Now a couple of weeks ago we spoke about end times. That day is actually talking about a specific period of time.

[23 : 01] Basically it's like understanding the seasons. It's knowing what's going on around you. He's not talking about ongoing time like it's just day after day.

But he's actually talking about a set day. And the wise person knows that there is a set season and there is a task at hand that needs to be done.

A wise person understands that God, believe it or not, has set boundaries on our lives. There is a beginning and there is an end. And there are certain seasons that we have.

You guys who have kids that are younger kids, you understand that time of life is going to look a lot different 10 years from now. Those of you who have kids who have moved out of the house, it is a different life.

You now have different responsibilities. There's different things. But in each season, you are still called to glorify God in the way that he's called you to.

[24 : 10] There's no point of your life where you get an exempt card. If we are called to make disciples of Christ, it happens in every season.

And a wise person knows this and they make use of every opportunity to teach their kids, to teach their spouses or family or workplace.

There's nothing more lamentable than being with someone in a counseling session who confesses that during that time they were so busy, kind of in the mayhem of kids, that they never shared the gospel with them.

Or they never really got to know their kids personally. Now that the kids are out of the house, they've got strangers. They know them, but they really do not know them.

You see, the ultimate purpose is to live to the glory of God is to make him known. There's no such thing as I need a break. I'm in university. I don't have time for church.

[25 : 22] I'm busy at work. The fact of the matter is a wise person does not fall into those traps. The third characteristic of a wise person we see quite clearly in verse 17.

It says, wise people know what the will of God is. Wise people know what the will of God is. God hasn't given us a will that he hides and that we have to go searching and looking for it.

If you remember, one of the first sermons that I ever preached here at Squamish Baptist churches was how to know God's will.

God actually tells us in his Bible what his will is. And I'm going to give you the points very quickly. I'd encourage you to go back if you weren't at this church or you forget.

There's basically six things that God says his will are. The first one is God's will that you be saved. It's God's will that you be saved. Number two, it's God's will that you be sanctified, that you be holy.

[26 : 30] The second, third thing is that God's will that you be submissive. That you be submissive to God's will. The fourth is that you be spirit filled.

The fifth one is that it is God's will that you serve. And the sixth one, it is God's will that you suffer. That as a believer, you will come under the discipline of God because he wants to grow you just like a child into a mature adult.

You see, wise people know their actions coincide with these things. They know that as believers, they are to pursue holiness. They are to pursue what is good, right, and true.

As a wise person, you understand the role of the church. You understand the purpose of what we are to accomplish.

A wise person doesn't cry out during trials and say that they do not believe in them. But a wise person accepts the trials with the understanding that God is refining them, growing them, and building them into someone who is even more like him.

[27 : 50] Because that's the promise. Jesus Christ wants us more like him. They understand that God's discipline is right, just.

And sometimes it's just for a short time. So maybe you're sitting there today saying, hey, you know, I want that, but those things aren't in my life.

I actually don't respond well to trials. I don't respond well to God's will. I sometimes act more like an unbeliever than I do a believer.

Sometimes I find myself wasting a lot of time. And I kind of remember to do things four months later than it was due.

I miss that opportunity to share. I miss that time when my kid was opening up to me. And I said, I got to get this work project done. So today I want to give you six reasons why wisdom eludes you.

[28 : 51] All right? First one, you might not be saved. The first reason why wisdom might be eluding you is you might not know the Lord Jesus Christ.

You may not have accepted the free offer of salvation that he offers you. You might think because you come to church, your family, your parents, your brothers, your sisters are saved.

That must mean I'm saved too. So let me be the one to encourage you. Bow down to him. Call out his name.

Ask him to be your personal savior. Not your family's savior. Not your friend's savior. Don't go looking for an experience. But look for Jesus.

It's the understanding that moral right living isn't going to accomplish. Those are the ways of a fool. So that's the first reason why wisdom might elude you.

[29 : 56] You might not actually know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. The second reason why you might lose as the fool over the wise is because you live as a sinner and not a saint.

You might actually have your mind set in a defeated purpose where you fail to recognize that you are actually the child of God.

And as a child of God, you have the ability to boldly go before the throne of grace. People who struggle with an understanding whether they're God or maybe they're a sinner, prayer is usually non-existent from their life.

Because they're embarrassed. They're shameful. Sin comes in. Oh, I'm just acting like what I am. I'm a horrible person. When confronted with sin, they recoil.

They don't want to accept. Oh, I know you're right. I'm horrible. No, you're not horrible. You're acting horrible. But you're actually a new creation. I used to, there was a culture that I grew up with.

[31 : 13] And it was like God always was almost too busy to bother with you. Anybody ever have that? I grew up with that thought that, oh, you don't want to pray too much to God. You don't want to bother him with that.

He's much too busy. That was the greatest lie from hell. And the picture that I had of the culture was, it was almost like we were children at the foot of the table hoping any crumb would fall off the table.

And if I had it, oh, I'm just so happy. I'm so thankful that I had this day-old bread follow me. And I'm not going to complain. And praise Jesus.

That was dead faith. The reality is children of God. You know where we sit? We sit at the table. Where they serve the freshest breads, the ripest fruit, the best cooked meat.

Why? Because we're children of God. We can submit our request to God. We can come to Him. Just as we read in that text of Psalm 103, our sins are discarded.

[32 : 22] But what happens is when we sin, and we sin, and sometimes we sin mightily, we run. When we fail to understand that we have this Father waiting at the table for us.

And while we're running off, He's sitting there waiting at the table for us, right? When is He going to clue in that He sees? It's not like we're giving it away. Right?

So sometimes we don't understand our identity. The third reason why you might be struggling with foolishness rather than wisdom is that Jesus is your Savior, but He's not your Lord.

What I mean by that is there's certain segments of your life you believe are still yours, and God hasn't gotten them all. You kind of keep these little quadrants open.

And you think that sin in that quadrant is okay. What happens is you are thinking lesser thoughts of God because God is Lord.

[33 : 36] You know that? Jesus Christ is Lord. He cannot be your Savior and not be your Lord. He doesn't say, take part of me. You want all of me.

I remember, and I probably shared this. The memory just hangs in my head when I was in university, and one of my friends said, hey, man, you're really religious on some things but not on others.

And they were basically telling me, you know what? You're really good on these areas, but those other things, God doesn't seem to have penetrated that part of your life. Just even recently, I was in a discussion.

I was answering a theological question, and someone at their church was always referring to the God of the Old Testament. They kept using the term baby God, baby God, baby God. And finally, what do you mean by baby God?

And they said, well, the God of the Old Testament obviously wasn't a mature God. And it's not until we get to Jesus Christ in the New Testament that, okay, so first of all, what have you read and understood of the Old Testament?

[34 : 41] But they just saw God as this out-of-control, angry being. And finally, Jesus Christ comes and kind of calms them down and starts loving humanity. Totally outside the bounds of Scripture, right?

But this guy's at what's supposed to be a New Testament church. That's not, God's always been perfect, as we understood through these attributes.

And the thing is, God also doesn't allow us to section them off. When we accept them as Lord and Savior, we get everything.

We want everything. So the fourth way that the reason why you may be a fool is you're disobedient. You are living in disobedience. Now, this is a tough one. Because you might be saying, man, I am doing all the right things at home. I obey my parents. I don't steal.

[35 : 41] I don't thief. And when you look at that life, it actually looks like a moral life in a lot of ways. But what I find interesting is Galatians 3, 1 to 3 gives us this interesting thought.

It says, oh, foolish Galatians, right? He's calling them, oh, foolish Galatians. Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed and crucified.

Let me ask you only this. Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now perfected by the flesh?

What he was talking about is the Galatian church started adding works to their salvation. There's got to be more that I can do to please God. We start to go beyond the bounds of God.

I am saved by grace, but I live by works, right? That's sin. That's not the message that Jesus Christ preached.

[36 : 49] The cross is all in all. Nothing is to be added to it. Now, where does it get us? Sins? Failure to forgive. Failure to forgive is the number one sin that underlines and destroys a Christian life.

You fail to forgive, bitterness grows. Bitterness grows. Not loving someone the way they need and need to be loved is another way that we disobey.

Another one is to live separate from one another. Sometimes we think we can go away and do spiritual things on our own. In fact, in the Bible, all spiritual things are done together.

I cannot practice my humility on my own. But when you speak truth into my life, my pride is confronted so that I can confess it and be made mature and wise in Christ.

So that's the fourth way that reason why you might be foolishness. The fifth reason why you might be foolish is because your heart is placed on something else other than Jesus.

[38 : 05] Jesus might have a ranking on there, but I'm going to bet there's someone or something else that has a higher ranking. You know what these are called? They're called idols.

Sometimes we begin to think that if we can just get this one thing in life, everything will be okay. If I can just get this girl to love me and I get to be married, everything will be happy.

If I can just have these kids, the kind of kids that I want to have, everything will be all right. If I can get this job that I know will really help me.

And our mind gets twisted. I tell you, Lord, if I had, listen, I don't want to say too much, but man, if I was making maybe 250, you know, let's go 350 grand a year.

Just think about how much I can give, right? Oh, how much more I would be free to do all these things for you. 1 Timothy 6.9, It's not just money.

[39 : 16] It's education works. Sometimes it can even be family. They've got a friend fighting this battle at the church where if you do not come as a perfect family, you are God's second chosen people.

They're not recognizing the blessings that they had as parents who raised them right. And as they raised their kids, not everybody had that opportunity. Nobody, it's such a small minority.

But then they look at that as some extra blessing. That's a lie from the pit of hell. Their idol is not on Jesus.

It's a subtle sin. It's hard to spot. And sometimes we really need to take the time to pray and ask God, Lord, reveal what my idol is.

Usually you know it's an idol when it gets pointed out and you feel shame. Deep shame. And you run away from confronting that. And the reality is churches make the same mistakes.

[40 : 31] Lord Jesus Christ gave us a whole bunch of commands. But I know churches that decide, you know what? We're going to be relevant. We're going to get rid of the word sin. We're never going to mention Satan.

We're not going to use hell. God pretty much wipes out those churches. They don't exist. They might get big, but they're not a church. But I do know faithful churches that try to be more missional than worshipful.

We're going to live for non-Christians rather than for Christians. And sooner or later they just kind of fall apart. Why? Because they tend not to be united.

They're not humble. And they're not standing on foundation. They're standing on sinking sand. And the sixth reason why you might be a fool is that you forget that there is an enemy who prowls around seeking to destroy you.

We have an enemy and his name is Satan. And he comes between marriages. He comes between in the workplace. He lifts up our idols.

[41 : 37] And sometimes we're not dealing with it right. That's why the whole chapter, the sixth chapter, is devised to spiritual warfare.

Because everything that we're doing to make the church alive in our culture, Satan sees to undo.

We have an enemy who is cunning and more intelligent than we are.

He knows us better than we care to admit. And we cannot afford to ignore him. So when we feel the pressure to disobey, ignore, or place our hearts on things that we know aren't good, take a step back.

And it might seem so natural to sin. Think about it. God doesn't want this.

God doesn't want this. God doesn't want this. God doesn't want this. That's why I really believe, just as I was pondering upon these verses, that when Jesus says, cast all your burdens on him, those are our sins.

[42 : 41] Our addictions. Our, whether it be anger that we deal with, or frustration, or sexual, all those things that we have. Over eating. Anything.

We need to get to a point of, Lord, I can't take this anymore. I've got to put it on you. Now, bringing it all back to the idea of a church.

If we were a church that did not preach the gospel. If we were a church that lived defeated lies.

If we were a church that was wishy-washy about sin. If we said we were full of grace. Hey, I know you're sinning, but keep on sinning.

And don't confront it. If we created certain idols, sacred cows in the church. I remember this one church. They raised all their money to do this.

[43 : 47] Their floor was horrible. It was uneven. It was in their basement. They ran a huge Awana program. About 120 kids. They saved up and they bought a new floor. But then they decided that they didn't want the kids to run on the new floor.

Like, what else are you going to use it for? Well, maybe we'll have weddings there. Like, what's the kind of church you don't want to have a wedding at? Or definitely not the banquet.

Like, God blessed you with the floor. Let them grow that ministry. Get more kids running and making it fall apart. God can afford a new floor. Amen? But we get sacred about certain things.

And we ignored Satan. Do you think if we did all those things, Satan or God would bless this church? You can answer that.

If we didn't preach the gospel, did not confront sin, created sacred cows that we thought made us more religious. Is that the kind of church that Jesus Christ said, yeah, that's the one I died for?

[44 : 56] Of course not, right? So sometimes we accept those things in us. But when we start thinking about it in the community, we would never accept that.

These are the things we need to think about. It was interesting just, I really believe if we want to make an impact in our family, our community, with our friends, coworkers, and in this city, we need to pursue the path of wisdom.

In our men's study, we ended off with this verse out of Ecclesiastes 4.9. It writes, If one falls down, his friend can help him up.

But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up. A wise man is intentional in building himself in or herself into this church, into believers.

We are to take care of one another. A fool is one who tries to make it on their own. You see, the reality is we are a gift to one another.

[46 : 20] And sometimes it's not a matter of us asking to help people. Sometimes we need to ask for help. Do you know that?

I hear more complaints than any other complaint is the church wasn't there for me. I had a big move. No one was there to help me. Well, did you let people know? Did you ask?

I've been confronted with that one a lot of times. I was sick for that week. No one brought me any food. No one knew. It's interesting. We get excited about James 5.13.

It says, If anyone among you is suffering, let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church.

And let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. The operative word I want you to pay attention to, it's let him call. You know what?

[47 : 16] We want to do these things. We want a church that wants to connect, to love, to build into. We want a wise church. We want a church that God blesses. We also want to hear from you.

The whole idea is that sometimes life gets so tiring, we cannot lift our arms anymore. And one of the things is, wise people ask for help.

Let me pray. Dear Lord, there's a lot to say about foolishness and wisdom. In fact, you've got 30 chapters dedicated to it in Proverbs.

But there is a way that seems right to man that is truly foolishness to you. Yet there is a way that is right to you that is the path of wisdom.

Father, I pray that our heart's desires would be set on wisdom. If there's life changes that need to happen, let us seek the help from those in this church to help get out of those foolish patterns and to walk in the way of wisdom.

[48 : 35] I thought that was such a sad commentary that Ecclesiastes says, pity the man that has no one there to pick him up.

Father, I pray that we'd be a church that cultivates wisdom, that we would not sit in our own folly, that we would recognize the times that we are in. We are blessed with children.

We are blessed with youth. I'm excited. And I pray that here in this church, you would raise up people understanding the time.

We're not going to have forever. I pray we would not waste it on fruitless endeavors, but that we would actually use it to spend time building into the lives of others.

What an opportunity we have to serve our youth ministry and even our children's ministry right now. To come and bring our wealth of, some of it is more pain than praise, but so be it.

[49 : 45] Bring it. Share. Help. Be a part of the work that God is doing. We ask these things in your name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.