

# Don't Turn Back

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. So go with me to Proverbs chapter 9. And I'm not even going to take the time to read the chapter because we've used up a lot of time.

We've got about 21 or 22 minutes left before the evening's over. And we're going to talk about wisdom is calling you. That's what's happening in Proverbs chapter 9. Proverbs chapter 9.

And, you know, basically what's going on in these first eight or nine chapters, there's two people calling folly, foolishness, sin, rebellions calling you, wisdom's calling you, and you've got to choose.

And there are three different people principally that are being called in Proverbs to come and follow. And so this is the third call that wisdom makes. Look at Proverbs 9.4 with me, if you would.

It says, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither. As for him that wanteth understanding, she said to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink the wine which I mingle. So she's inviting the simple guy to come in.

[ 1 : 0 1 ] The first invitation went out to the fool, the scorner, and the simple. The second invitation just went to the fool and the simple. He got rid of the scorner. He said, I'm not going to invite you again. You scoffed, you mocked, you made fun, and you're not going to get invited.

The simple is going to reject wisdom's gracious call and go to death and hell. Now, the obvious lesson of the chapter is you better choose wisdom.

You better choose wisdom and follow wisdom. There's no middle ground. Jesus said, He that's not with me is against me. You're either on one side or you're on the other. We either follow wisdom or follow Christ or sin.

So let me walk you through the chapter and give you about five things maybe you can think about as you go home. Number one thing that happens in chapter 9, verses 1 through 6, is wisdom prepares this wonderful banquet.

Wisdom prepares a wonderful banquet. If you read the chapter with me, I'm going to read the six verses. I'm going to give them to you the Tennessee redneck real quick. Wisdom builds. She's got a house built.

[ 2 : 0 4 ] She's got seven pillars. She's killed some animals. She's got the wine ready. She's got the table prepared. She's got the girls ready to serve the stuff. And she cries out in the highest places.

Verse 4, Hey, simple guys, come on in here. You kind of dumb guys, come on in here. And verse 5, Come eat of my bread. Drink the wine which I've mingled. Forsake the foolish.

Forsake the foolish in verse 6. And live and go in the way of understanding. So there's the invitation. Come to the house of wisdom. Come to the house of wisdom and learn. Salvation and serving Christ is more like a banquet than a burden.

In the story here, you've got wine. You've got food. And you've got servers. And it's a party. Come on in. Come on in and learn. The food and drink have been prepared. The invitation has been given.

And there's no price assigned. Just come on in. All the simple one had to do was turn from his foolishness and he could live. Salvation was waiting. And when you present Jesus, don't ever present him like a funeral.

[ 3 : 06 ] One of the big problems we have is we've turned Christianity into a sad, depressing time. We've turned it into, we act like being serving God.

So you've got to suck on lemons to serve God. That's not what you've got to do. That's what's going on in those first verses. Now go with me to verse 7. Second thing is you've got to know who to teach. And I'll talk to you missionaries and disciples here for just a minute.

You've got to know who to teach. In verse 7 he said, he that reproves a scorner gets shame. So just let me go through the things and give you some words of wisdom for a disciples. Words of wisdom for a disciples.

If I were teaching you about discipling or training leaders, I'd be using these words right here. And so let me just give you some of them. You notice if you've got your Bible open, if you reprove a scorner, you get shame.

You rebuke a wicked man, you get a blot. But you're not to reprove a scorner because he'll hate you. So there's three guys you don't mess with. You don't mess with those guys. And then he said, but you rebuke a wise man, he loves you.

[ 4 : 06 ] You give instruction to a wise man, he gets wiser. You teach a just man, he increases in learning. So here's just some missionary principles that I would use to improve for you.

You must learn who you can rebuke and who you should not rebuke. You know, as a pastor or a disciple or a deacon or a leader, you better know who you can talk to.

There's some people, just best let them alone. You must learn who you can rebuke. We waste our time on people who are not interested. That's a big one. You know, I talk to young guys and say, I'm a witness to this guy.

I've been a witness to him for a year. He never comes to church. But every time I talk to you, you never witness to another guy. You just witness to him. And here's what Solomon would have said. Don't waste your time with that guy. Don't waste your time with that guy. They're only using you to get what they want.

That's for missionaries. You know, as you at the Missionville, you missionaries, people are going to like you. Especially if you don't go to Europe or a country that makes us on our same level. They're going to like you just because you've got money. They're going to like you because you've got a blue passport.

[ 5 : 01 ] And you've got to be very careful that you know who to choose to work with. If you're going to train leaders, be careful to watch the attitude of the one you're working with. If he rebels, remember you only get a blot and shame for trying to tell him something.

If he rebels, so like if you start, you know, when I speak to a guy, and this is what I tell all the guys here, and I would tell everybody here, if you're going to disciple, I hope you leaders of our church will start discipling other people.

If you're going to disciple a guy, you put the ball in their court. And if they don't return the ball, if I serve you the ball, and you don't serve the ball, if you don't hit the ball back to me, I'll give you two or three chances.

I'm walking away. That's what's going on in the chapter. You don't try to work with a guy you don't want to be worked with. Don't stay where you're not wanted, so you don't reprove him. He will hate you for reproving him.

Look at what it says in chapter 9, verse 8. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate you. I mean, there are people that if you were to go to them and say, you know, a good Christian ought not do that. There are people you went to and said, man, you ought to read your Bible.

[ 6 : 00 ] Man, you ought to be faithful to church. He's going to hate you for doing it. You're just wasting your time. No need to stir that guy up. He may withdraw from you. Many times they'll even look at you, not look at you nor talk to you.

I've been doing this for a long time, like 40 years, and I can just tell you, there's certain people, you start talking to them, they'll dodge you every time they see you coming. You go to a guy and you say, hey, I'm here to help you. I want to train you.

I want to work with you. I want to do something in your life to help you grow, and he'll dodge you. He will dodge you. He will run from you. That's exactly what the verse is talking about, so be careful about that. This is a way to find out who can be trained or taken on to greater leadership.

By the way, if you rebuke a wise man, you saw what it said. It said he will keep coming back for more. You talk to a wise guy, not a wise guy, a wise man.

You talk to a wise man and you tell him something, he'll be like, man, I want more of that. You tell him, hey, you're not doing something right, he'll want more than that. You give him instruction. Verse 9, look what happens.

[ 7 : 02 ] You give him instruction. He increases in learning. He increases in learning. Not all should be or can be trained to be leaders of leaders. Not all are teachable.

You know, that's a big thing you ought to work on. Every one of us ought to work on. I need to work on that. I just preached this here at our church Sunday night. Moses was still teachable. Moses was still teachable after having the greatest education.

Let's be teachable. If you mess with a scorner, he's just going to shame you. He's going to embarrass you. That's what it says in chapter 9, verse 7. He that reproves a scorner gets to himself shame.

Shame and a blot is all you can expect from a mocker or a scoffer. He will talk bad about you. He will try to destroy your reputation. He will hate you. There are people you just don't try to help.

Don't try to help. Look at what happens on verse 8. You'll get love from the wise. You'll get love from the wise. Look what it says. Rebuke not a scorner, lest he hate you.

[ 8 : 06 ] Rebuke a wise man, however. He'll love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser. Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

So, you know, it's not your call to decide who's wise. And there's right ways for you to teach him. But Solomon is teaching his son how to deal with people.

And he's saying, look, son, there are people. It's a waste of time to try to work with them. It's a waste of time to try to work with certain people. It's a waste of time. They don't want it. They're going to just make you, they're going to say ugly things about you.

They're going to walk away. They're going to hide from you. They're going to shame you. They're going to blot you. They're going to hate you. So don't work with them. That's really what's going on. Wisdom here, I think, is Christ. And he says, okay, you don't want my help.

That's it. I walk. You don't want my help. I walk. And so that's what's going on in the chapter. There's great good that comes from accepting the invitation. That's the third thing. Look at verse 10. Look at verse 10.

- [ 9 : 06 ] The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the knowledge of the holy is understanding. For by me, thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.
- If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself. But if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it. As you turn in respect towards the Lord, you get wisdom and understanding.
- Isn't that a wild thing? A Tennessee hillbilly without a bathroom as a boy can become a wise and understanding person as he turns to the Bible, as he turns to Jesus, as he turns to God.
- The quality of your life increases. He says here you live a long life. You'll live a happy life. You choose your way. You choose his way. You determine much of the quality of your life.
- And here's the big lesson in that passage right there. Your decisions are your decisions. And you're alone in them. Look at what it says if you would in verse 12. If you're wise, then you're wise for yourself.
- [ 10 : 04 ] And if you're scorned, you'll bear the scorned yourself. Your wisdom is yours alone. It's an individual matter. How about this one? Nothing guarantees the building of your character but the decisions you make.
- You can have the best home in the world. You can have the best church in the world. You can have the best college in the world. The best school in the world. You can have all the best training. But you will choose. You can be a disciple of Jesus Christ and not do good.
- I know one. His name was Judas. Don't you? You can have the same parents as a guy who turns out great. Abel and Seth and turn out bad like Cain. In other words, everybody makes their own deceit.
- That's a big lesson. That helped me when my daughter ran away from home. Because when my daughter ran away from home and we were in Peru, they're like, it about killed me. Because there's a proverb that says, Train up a child in the way she'll go.
- And when they're old, they'll not depart from it. And I said, that ain't working. But see, every child makes their decision. And you are making your decisions. And by the way, it doesn't matter. You can live good for 40 years, but your whole life is based on your decisions.
- [ 11 : 08 ] And bad decisions create bad character. Bad decisions create bad character. Choose right. Make right decisions.
- And here's a wild one for you as born-again believers. You don't make one decision. It's not like, well, I chose to accept Christ. I'm okay. No. You choose every day of your life.
- I choose if I'll keep coming to church. I choose if I'll read my Bible. I choose if I honor God with my money. I choose if I honor God with my time. Every day I make choices. I choose on how I treat my wife.
- I choose on how I live. I choose every day your decisions. Hey, come on. Come to the banquet. Come on in. We've killed the cows. We've got the wine ready. We've got the servers ready.
- We're ready to have a big banquet. We're going to have a good time. Go call the dummy to come on in here. We're going to help you. I don't care how simple you are. You come on in here. We'll help you.
- [ 12 : 03 ] And wisdom is going to be great. Come on in. And so it's a fantastic thing. But the deal is you make that decision. You make that decision. I would like to say to some of the younger guys here, it's so easy for you to think I made a decision when I was six to accept Christ and I'm saved and I'm once saved, always saved, and I'm always going.

That's not true. Let me tell you, that statement is twisted. Once saved, always saved is a true statement if you were really once saved. But what you mean when you say once saved, always saved is once prayed, always saved.

That's what you mean. Once I went to the front and filled out that little copy, that little piece of paper, once I filled out confirmation card, once confirmation card, always saved. That's not what's going on.

What it amounts to is if you're born again, you're really born again, and if you ain't, you ain't. And I hate to say this, some of you parents, man, you're so quick to rush your child into signing a little card at four.

At five, you want to rush your kid into it and let them, but they ain't made a decision. They ain't made a decision. It's not from their heart. And life is based on making a choice.

[ 13 : 10 ] I choose Jesus over sin and over folly. Go with me to verse 13 if you would. Come to the banquet or head on to death and hell. That's what happens in verses 13 and following.

Verse 13, a foolish woman is clamorous. He tells in verse 16, a simple guy, come on in, but look at verse 18. It's kind of the key to what's going on in this passage. He knoweth not the dead are there.

He knoweth not the dead are there and that our guests are in the depths of hell. Simple guy. You're going wrong and you're messing up. So let me give you a few thoughts.

Sin has pleasure for a season. The Bible says that in Hebrews chapter 11 verse 25. They chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

And sin can have brief, momentary pleasure. You can sneak off and do something that doesn't please God and enjoy it briefly, but it's going to bite you in the rear before it's over.

[ 14 : 14 ] That's a big lesson. Hey, wisdom's crying out to you. Folly's crying out to you. Choose. And I choose every day of my life. I make choices every day of my life. And if you've chosen right, you want to keep on choosing right.

James chapter 1 verse 13 through 16. You might look that up later. You probably aren't going to do it right now, but let me just read that to you. Let no man say when he's tempted, I am tempted of God.

For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts any man. You've never been tempted by God. God never tries to get you to do wrong. God never tries to get you to do wrong. But every man is tempted when he's drawn away of his own lust and enticed.

God didn't make you that way. God didn't put that in you, and you're not stuck without having a choice. You choose. You choose. The biggest new one that they like to blame on God is, I'm not male nor female.

I'm a third kind. I'm homosexual. And they like to say God made them that way. No, no, no, no, no, no. The Bible's real clear about that. And by the way, the doctor was pretty clear when he saw you. He figured out which one you were. He figured out which one you were when he saw you.

[ 15 : 21 ] When you try to say, well, God did this to me. He made me like that. No, God didn't make you that way. You chose to be that way. And yeah, you live in a world where it's out in front of you all the time. But by the way, for all you older people, this ain't nothing new.

I often hear older people say, ain't never been like this. You're right. It was a lot worse than this than Sodom and Gomorrah. But thank God it ain't so bad today. But it was really bad back then. But sin, it says in verse 14, Lust, the desire to do wrong, the opportunity to do wrong, get together and they conceive.

The desire to do wrong and the opportunity to do wrong get together and they conceive. And when they conceive, they bring forth sin. And sin, when it's finished, when it's finished.

And by the way, sin knows how to put on a pretty skirt. And by the way, Proverbs talks like that, so don't get upset. Sin knows how to put on a pretty skirt and call your attention. But as soon as you go down there, she's going to take it off and show you her ugly, hideous face.

And she's on the road to death and hell. That's what's going on. And then he finishes that little passage with, Do not err, my beloved brother. Don't make this mistake, my beloved brother.

[ 16 : 38 ] So here's some practical decisions we can take away. I'll give you five practical decisions from this chapter. We'll talk about them just briefly. We've got about four minutes by my watch. Number one, you cannot avoid making decisions.

You cannot avoid making decisions. I think one of the biggest mistakes we make is I can put this off. I don't have to make this choice. Yes, you do.

You're choosing. When you choose not to, you're choosing not to. When you choose to wait, you're still choosing not to. So you're choosing. When you do that, you have to choose. Wisdom's calling you.

Folly's calling you. Which one will you follow? She invited three people and all three people messed up. Which one will you follow? Decision determines destiny. That just goes with that thought.

Decision determines destiny. You can't avoid decisions. You will choose either the path of wisdom or the path of folly. You cannot postpone this decision.

[ 17 : 38 ] You cannot avoid it. To choose one, you have to reject the other. To reject one is to choose the other. What choice have you made? First one, you cannot avoid making decisions.

You cannot avoid the decision for wisdom or folly. If you will choose Jesus or you'll choose sin, you'll choose wisdom or you'll choose folly. By the way, you're going to make decisions every day of your life. Tonight when we get through here, we're all going to make a choice.

I'm going to make a choice if I'm going to keep honoring God. I'm going to make a choice if I'm going to go home to my wife and do what I ought to do. I'm going to make a choice if I want to do something else. Within the last month, a pastor of a megachurch killed himself. 42 years old.

Took his life. He chose that. Let's just be honest. He can blame it on the church. He can blame it on the devil. He can blame it on anybody he wants. But he made that choice. You're making that choice. You say, well, things were just too much for him.

Well, he chose to let things get to be too much for him. You can just back up. You're choosing. You're choosing. You're choosing. Number two, sin's attractive. Sin is attractive.

[ 18 : 38 ] Sin is attractive. That's what's going on here. In Proverbs, sin's attractive. And sin's out on the street. And sin's calling you. And sin will deceive you. Sin's attractive, but it deceives you.

Sin's attractive, but it deceives you. Almost everybody will drive by our church, and they don't want to be here. Because it looks like we take all the good out of life. It looks like we say no to all the good stuff in life because the devil has painted sin real attractive.

In Pilgrim's Progress, Pilgrim and Faithful are on their way to the celestial city. They're on their way to the celestial gates.

They're going to go to heaven. And they come to Vanity Fair. And Vanity Fair was a carnival atmosphere. And there was pretty girls and pretty music and pretty food and everything that your heart could desire and your eyes could want.

It was all there. And they knew that they were in trouble if they didn't watch it. And they knew something would happen. And when they refused to indulge in the pleasures of Vanity Fair, they got locked in jail.

[ 19 : 39 ] While they're laying in jail, they're both talking to each other. And they were saying in the story, John Bunyan writes while he's in prison, they're saying, one of us is probably going to die. And Faithful said, I hope it's me because I'm Faithful.

And Pilgrim said, you shouldn't cheat and try to go first. And they took Faithful and killed him. And Pilgrim had to go on and keep living the Christian life. But sin's attractive. It'll mess you up. Porn is attractive.

It's just cute. You know, you get to turn on there and you watch something on TV or on the Internet. And you watch some kind of junk. And you see body parts. And you see sex. And it's cute. It's attractive.

But it's deceptive. And it will destroy you. That's the story that's going on here. Number three. Number three. Judgment doesn't always happen quickly. I think that's the big lesson that most of us need to learn.

Judgment doesn't happen quickly. You do wrong. There's this thought. And especially the way the old time preachers preached it. The older guys here will remember.

[ 20 : 39 ] There's almost the idea. If you step out here and get you one beer, you'll end your life right there. You drink one beer. Your life's over. I mean, God will strike you dead. Cars will come off the road and hit you. A lightning bolt will kill you.

And so some backslidden Christian saw sin attractive, stepped over and got one drink and waited to see if it was happening. When it didn't happen, he said, I'll take two. And he thought he was getting away with it.

Or he snuck off with a girl that wasn't his wife. And he was making out with her. And he was having adultery. He was committing adultery with her. He was looking at a porn. And he was getting deeper into porn or stealing or lying or cheating or whatever he was doing.

He was doing just one more step of it. And nothing happened. That's what's really crazy. You know, you can do wrong for a long time and nothing go wrong. You can do wrong for a long time and get away with it.

But you won't always get away with it. It was so bad that David got really discouraged about it. He said, I look around and they're wicked. They don't love my God. And everything's good. Life is harder for me than it is for them.

[ 21 : 36 ] I don't understand this. He said, but then I went to the house of God and I thought about it a little bit. And I considered my end and I considered their end. And I figured out something. I'll stick with mine.

And that's what's going on. Sin is attractive. But judgment doesn't come quickly. And I think, you know, if judgment happened quickly, we probably wouldn't do it.

I mean, can you imagine? A fat guy like me says he wants to lose weight. If I went and got a quarter pounder and it just plopped up another quarter pound on the side over here, I would probably stop eating. Stick a candy bar in.

There it is. You're like, oh, that's that candy bar. You probably quit. That ain't how it happens. I can eat that candy bar and go away and don't even gain weight today. But it gets it.

I've lost more weight good than that. I've lost hundreds of pounds. I could lose 50 pounds and gain right back. That's what's going on here. You don't get caught quick. You don't get caught quick.

[ 22 : 38 ] You sow a field, the crop doesn't come up overnight. Number four. Satan and sin appeal to the flesh and carnal desires.

In other words, what Satan does and what goes on in Proverbs and Solomon's talking to his boy and what's going on in the story. It's all about pleasure. It's all about what you do, what you feel, how you enjoy.

And that's where he plays his game. That's the game he plays. It's physical pleasures of what he's going to offer. And God's offering you spiritual pleasures that will bring physical pleasures also.

And the last lesson I think is interesting. We're nine chapters in and God's still calling. We're nine chapters in and God's still calling. Hey, fool, he's still calling you. Hey, simple, he's still calling you.

Hey, scorners, he's still calling you. That's a big lesson from the chapter. He's still calling you. And so there's your little lesson from Proverbs chapter nine. Wisdom's calling.

[ 23 : 38 ] Wisdom's calling. And if I could say anything, listen to me. You're going to go home. You're going to make a decision. And I don't think we ever understand it. Every there was this.

I mean, as a young preacher, starting when I was 15, I thought I thought, man, they'll make that decision. It'll radically change their life. And, you know, we want those wild conversion stories.

And we want those wild, crazy religious meetings where people are swinging from the chandeliers and running around the room. But see, 50 years later, you don't even remember that message. It's an everyday decision.

It's not like you're going to get zambued by God and that's it. That's not the way it works. And you may say, well, I know a Christian made a decision and never went back and his life was totally changed.

Well, it was totally changed. But it continued totally changed because he kept making decisions. Because you make a decision, you've got to make another one tomorrow. I made a decision to marry Betty on the 18th of August, 1973.

[ 24 : 39 ] But I've been making that decision every day. I've had opportunities to think about other ladies. I've had opportunities to go to the places you all got the opportunity to take off. There have been more than one time in my life when the ministry and everything was like drowning me.

And I thought to myself, I'd like to just take off and run. What if I just drove my car out to somewhere in Montana and got me a horse and hid behind a tree like all them cowboys do?

And you get some crazy thoughts. And then I said, that's stupid. Quit thinking that way. But you thought that and went and got a beer, got drunk, and you're divorced and it'll ruin your life. Be careful. Decisions.

Father, I love you. Thank you for the chance to talk to your men. Thank you for the opportunity to be here tonight. Thank you for bringing Brother Watson here. Pray your blessings on him and the ministry there at Calvary. And I thank you, Lord, for all you do in our lives.

We love you and praise you. In Jesus' name. Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com) where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.