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Walk As Wise People, Not Fools, Pt 3

Ephesians 5:15

PowerPoint Presentation: None

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SermonAudio blurb:

I. Introduction.

A. Read 5:15.

1. Reason (16): we live in a time of evil therefore our life choices in how we conduct ourselves in every aspect of life in this age is to reflect the victory found in Jesus Christ rather than conformity to this age.
2. The fool is one who resists God's ways and God's pathway given to Christians. He is one who stiffens his neck toward God's word.

B. Last week we learned what the foundation of true wisdom is. The fear of YHWH.

1. To fear God is not the same as to be afraid of God.
2. To fear God is to believe in Him and His ability to deliver you.
3. To fear the Lord is the gateway to wisdom, it is not the end of wisdom

C. How does a person fear YHWH?

1. First, it involves divine revelation.
2. Second, the fear of the Lord is something that is taught.
3. Finally, the fear of the Lord involves a proper orientation toward a person—YHWH.
 - a. We recognize it is not a relationship of equals. We come as sinners in need of redemption and forgiveness.
 - b. We come in humility before the Lord. He is God, we are not. We submit our hearts, lives and dreams under His Lordship.

II. How do you seek and find wisdom? (Proverbs 2:1-6)

A. Three conditions found in vss 1-2, 3, and 4.

1. Vss 1-2.

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- a. One must receive the Word of God. The second half of vs 1 helps explain that, to receive is to treasure.
 - b. Vs two expands on this by showing us the heart attitude of treasuring and receiving God's word.
 - (1) It speaks of a habit and a life-long commitment.
 - (2) it speaks of taking in the Word of God until it becomes ours. It is something we draw into the innermost part of ourselves.
 - (3) This is a life of thinking and considering the Word of God. It is learning, memorizing, contemplating, applying and obeying what is learned and treasured.
 - (4) It is learning to hear it. To make your ear attentive to it.
 - (a) It is like when I was learning woodworking and one of the students would be giving his opinion on something but then I heard the master woodworker begin to talk, I immediately turned my attention to her.
 - (b) When your ear is quick to hear and respond to everything but the Word folly is just around the corner.
2. Second condition is to pray (3).
 - a. What we pray for and not pray for reveals what we treasure and delight in. This is worthy of your thoughts.
 - b. If you truly desire wisdom that only comes from the Lord then it is only fitting that it is to the Lord to whom you pray.
 - c. It is noteworthy that the call to pray for wisdom comes after the call to learning and receiving the Word of God.
 - (1) I believe it is intentional. It points us to the need to know and to learn the Word so as to rightly pray.
 - (2) You do not learn wisdom by merely asking for it. You learn wisdom by reading the Word, delighting in it and as you learn you convert those things to prayer to see more of them.
 3. Third condition is to study (4).

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- a. Again there is purpose behind this placement. It puts receiving the Word of God and studying the Word of God as bookends with prayer in the middle.
 - b. Note the principle here, to know wisdom requires major effort and diligence.
 - (1) It is like mining for silver or looking not for treasure, but hidden treasure.
 - (2) If you don't delight in God's word then you will find little need to diligently study God's word.
 - c. But also built into this verse is faith.
 - (1) You search for wisdom only if you believe it is to be found in the Word.
 - (2) How long would you hack away at a spot in the ground if you did not believe gold or silver was to be found?
 - (3) Same is true of those who half-heartedly look at their bible and just shrug.
- B. The prize in vs 5.
- 1. But for the faithful, the prayerful and the diligent the Word of God will always yield up the prize—wisdom.
 - 2. Notice here that the fear of YHWH is parallel to the knowledge of God. Again we are reminded that fear here is less of emotion and more of a true understanding of the person of God.
 - 3. This is something this is a lifelong journey.
 - a. For the young Christian there comes that point where they believe and trust in the promises found in the gospel.
 - b. But their journey is only beginning. As they live and learn and as they endure trials and put away sin, they
 - 4. Vs 6 then closes up the whole section by explaining that it is YHWH who gives wisdom; therefore it is to the Lord we are to go.

III. Description of a wise man.

- A. A wise man departs from evil (Proverbs 14:16).
 - 1. The wise man respects God. He knows evil and avoids it.

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- a. Such was Joseph—Genesis 39:9,10; and Daniel’s friends—Daniel 3:16-18.
 - b. Applying this into the context of Ephesians and it fits well. We must learn the art of conducting life in all of its intricacies before the eyes of the Lord and in a fear of the Lord. We seek to discern evil and then turn from it—regardless the cost.
2. The fool has self-confidence and little restraint. He sins whenever he wants.
 - a. Note Proverbs 14:17.
 - b. Such was Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:13-15).
- B. A wise man knows how to listen.
1. A wise man will listen and learn from God — Proverbs 8:32-34.
 - a. Note that a person is wise when he hears instruction and does not refuse it (33). Both vs. 32 and 34 speak of the blessing that comes from obedience.
 - b. Notice the same truth in the introduction to the book—Proverbs 1:5. One is never too wise to learn from God's word.
 2. A wise man will learn from others.
 - a. He seeks the advice of others—Proverbs 24:5,6.
 - (1) Remember this counsel is for a king-to-be.
 - (2) The wise man is strengthened in his knowledge by seeking the wise counsel of others.
 - (3) One learns wisdom much like one carefully builds a house (Proverbs 24:3,4).
 - (4) The wise man is even taught by an ant—Proverbs 6:6.
 - (a) Wise parents are always watchful for life lessons with their little ones.
 - (b) You can even speak of the consequences of the Fall when you see an animal kill another.
 - (c) The rainbow and God’s promises.
 - (d) The strength of a bristle cone pine.

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- (e) The constant reality of decay in a broken down building or parking lot.
- b. He learns from the mistakes of others — Proverbs 24:30-34.
 - (1) The fool is so self-confident that he thinks his sin is right (Proverbs 10:23 12:15).
 - (2) The wise man listens to wisdom and does not walk in the way of a fool. The wise man is teachable (cf. Moses in Exodus 18:14-24).
- 3. A wise man will learn from a rebuke (Proverbs 9:8-10). Notice how a wise man asked when he is told is wrong:
 - a. He shows love to the one who rebukes (9:8). 1 Samuel 25:32ff.
 - b. He gains more wisdom (9:9a).
 - c. The rebuke teaches him what is really important (9:9b-10). Fools hate rebukes and will not learn from them though they complain when the consequences of their folly comes upon them.
 - d. The motto of the book is repeated here. Wisdom begins by fearing God.
- C. A wise man will control his lips.
 - 1. The wise man's principle is Proverbs 10:19; while the fool has many empty words (1 Timothy 5:13; 2 Timothy 2:16-17). The wise man is not always silent but he is cautious (James 1:19).
 - 2. The wise man's words are intended to build up others (Proverbs 12:18). His words should be helpful to others (cf. Proverbs 15:2, 7) not gossip!
 - 3. The wise man's words comfort his heart (Proverbs 16:23). He thinks before he speaks. Our words should be based on conviction, not feeling. We need the tongue of the learned (; 2 Corinthians 1:4).
 - a. "The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple. The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient, Nor did I turn back. I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. For the Lord God helps Me,

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Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know that I shall not be ashamed.” (Isaiah 50:4-7)

b. “. . . who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” (2 Corinthians 1:4)

4. The words of a wise man are worth listening to (Proverbs 22:17). So find the wise and listen!

D. Other characteristics of a wise man.

1. The wise man plans for the future (Proverbs 10:5).

2. The wise man will control his temper (Proverbs 29:11).

3. A wise man is not disturbed by the wisdom of the world (Proverbs 21:22).

4. A wise man does not respect person (Proverbs 24:23).

IV. Results of being a wise man.

A. A wise man brings joy to his family (Proverbs 10:1;15:20).

B. A wise man will lead fools (Proverbs 11:29).

1. But not always in this age, but as we saw in Isaiah 50, we will be vindicated in the end.

2. Remember the general nature of Proverbs. But even now in this very foolish time we see it true often enough.

C. A wise man will gain that which is truly important when he dies.

1. He will inherit glory—Proverbs 3:35. He will receive true glory (cf. Daniel 12:3; John 17:24; 1 John 3:2).

2. He will not see destruction (Proverbs 13:14). A man’s wisdom will keep from Satan’s ways (cf. Psalm 17:4).

3. He lives with eternal life in view (Proverbs 15:24). His way of life should be above because he is born from above (cf. John 14:6).

V. Truths for those who would be wise.

A. Conduct a patient search for wisdom (Proverbs 17:24). The wise man should have his eye fixed on wisdom. Notice in Proverbs 4:5-7 what is involved in a careful search for wisdom:

1. It must be acquired (vs 5).

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2. It can be forgotten (vs 6a just like Solomon). Knowing how to be wise today does not mean we will be wise tomorrow!
 3. It must be loved (vs 6b).
 4. It must be first in your life (vs 7a). God isn't looking for brains or opportunities but decisions! Obey him! What is important in your life?
 5. It must be obtained at all cost (vs 7b). Note that to be a disciple of Christ, in Luke 14:28ff, you must renounce everything and follow him.
- B. Seek out friends that will make you wise (Proverbs 13:20). Fellowship with God and godly people is the central to learning wisdom.
- C. There should be progress in your search for wisdom (Proverbs 19:20). You should have the goal to be wise.
- D. Remember that God can teach us through little things (Proverbs 30:24-28).

VI. Conclusion.

- A. Wisdom, we have learned, is not something that this age can even know.
- B. True wisdom comes only when we are rightly related to God. This only comes when we believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- C. But that is only the beginning. From there is will be the prize of all who seek it, treasure it, pray for it and diligently study.
- D. May this be true of MDF.