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Wisdom In The Trenches

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Ecclesiastes 10:1-20



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If you are new with us, it's important that you understand a little bit about who we are and what's most important to us. We have a mission at Providence that we believe that God gave us, and that is, we want to glorify the Lord. And how we do that is introduce all peoples throughout the world to Jesus Christ, and then to grow them up to love and worship him.

And as we've sought how to do that, we've made it as simple as we think that our minds can think. And what we've found within God's word of what we see, and that is to connect and to grow and to serve and go that if every one of us would connect to Christ into one another, if we were to be growing in the truth of his word in our love for people around the world, if we would be serving with the gifts that God has given to us, and then if we would go with the gospel, whether it's to nations or to our neighbors and tell them and love them and explain to them the hope that we have in Christ is that this would actually take place.

There's a part for everyone to play. And I want to encourage you that if this is the first time that you've been with us, or perhaps you've been here a long time and you're not quite sure how you engage, these pathway classes, one week, I believe will be greatly helpful to you.

Everyone of us, we want something that's worth our life. We want to give ourselves to something that's important. We want to give ourselves to something that's significant and that it's enduring. And the fact is only the kingdom of Jesus Christ will be enduring for what you find and what you see with your eyes here on this earth.

And so, we implore you to trust Jesus Christ and then to give your entire life, your entire life to his glory. So, let me pray for us as we get started. Father, as we open up your word, we believe that this moment is not only consequential, but it's incredibly formative that you desire to do amazing things within our heart, you desire to change things.

God, you desire, and you are the only one who has the ability to actually take a grave within the heart and turn it into a garden where at one time dead things would come, at one time things that were lifeless, impatience, and greed, and lost, and fear could be replaced with love, and joy, and peace, and patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

We desire for you to do that within our lives. And so, we pray that as we open up your word, that you would address us and that you would undress us of our pride of our unbelief and that you would give us the gift of belief as well as the courage to apply what we see and what we hear from your word. And so, I pray that as we open up your word in Ecclesiastes, God that it would cut deep and it would heal at the same time. Would you speak to our weakness and bring glory of Jesus Christ alone we pray in his name. Amen and amen.

Well, whether you're at home or in this room, I would love for you to look with me at Ecclesiastes 10. If you're new to this, if you're new to the Bible, it's sort of in the middle part. A fact that you're brand new to this and you've never held a Bible it's totally cool. We're really glad this was the first time that you get to do that. At the very beginning there's a lot of books and the names, and you can find the page number, but we are in a series through this really strange perplexing book that sometimes it takes a lot of patience to make it through.

And we happen to be just three sermons from the end. We're at the chapter 10. And so, I'd love for you to turn there with me. Every single day that we live on this earth, we are reminded of two pretty amazing things. One is how predictable this world is. And second is how unpredictable it feels. If you ever think about things that are predictable in the world, right? Seasons are predictable. Weather patterns are predictable. Bird migrations, they're predictable. Sunrises and sunsets, and ocean tides and water cycles and the laws of nature, laws of science, genetics, agriculture, chemistry, all these things. They're all predictable. They keep happening the way that God intends for them to take place.

In fact, we see throughout the world, you see within scripture throughout history and that through our world today is that the vast majority of all the created order gives immediate, quick and joyful obedience to God. God says, "I want you to do this." And the bird say, "As you wish," until you get to humanity.

And we who are created in the image of God, we who have the law of God, the justice of God, beauty of God stamped upon our own conscience. We hear from God and suddenly within our own heart, even though we are the crowning joy of his creation to himself. We look at him and we say, "No." And this causes a lot of unpredictability and a lot of brokenness in the world.

You think about what happens when we say no to the Lord. The Bible calls the sin. It calls it sin. And sin, when you open up the Bible, there's a lot of descriptions about what it feels like and what it is like, what God sees in our life when he sees sin. The first thing is sin separates, sin separates us from God, it separates us from each other, it separates.

Holy God, sinful people cannot dwell together. And so, we become separate from him. And I know for some of you, I just know some of you are tuning in right now and you're like, "My life is an absolute mess." Maybe your life is such a mess today that you're actually despairing life itself. I'm so glad that you've tuned in. And I want you to know something. I want you to know that your life is never going to make sense until you bow your knee to Jesus Christ. Amen.

He is your creator. Life is only supposed to make sense. You're only supposed to know joy, and peace, and meaning, and purpose in life when you understand that you were created by Jesus Christ for Jesus Christ, to live with Jesus Christ. And one day you'll stand accountable to Jesus Christ. He is the point. He's the reason of it all.

But when we sin, we separate from God. And not only do we do that, but when we separate from God, all of his instructions, he says are boiled down to two; love God and love one another as yourself. He says everything in the whole Bible. You wouldn't even need a Bible if you loved God with all of your heart and you loved your neighbor as yourself. That's what Jesus said. He said, every instruction within the scripture could be hung upon with just two laws, love and love.

But what happens is when we sin against God, it creates the social chaos and unrest in the world. The instructions that are supposed to protect one another now all of a sudden we say, "Well, I don't care what you think." And all of a sudden we do, now we hurt one another.

And what this does is it causes a loss-ness that is really described, I think in this picture, is that when we're lost and when we're sinning, it's like we're dropped into this endless maze of trenches where we're supposed to find a home and yet what we find within the scriptures is this, is that no matter how many trenches, no matter how many alleys, no matter how many rooms, no matter how many hobbies, and activities, and purposes, and pursuits you give yourself to on the earth is the trenches down here on this earth, they do not lead home.

Ecclesiastes is Solomon's conclusion of that very thing. This man who is unrivaled in wisdom and wealth, he gives himself all to wisdom and wealth. He walks away from the Lord, severs the relationship, causes unparalleled chaos to people within the world, and even in his own kingdom. And then he gives himself to trying to find meaning. And after a very long pursuit, most of his life now he's grandpa Solomon. And grandpa Solomon and he wants to sit everybody down and say, "Now, look, this is what I've learned. This is what I've found, the trenches don't lead home. And if there's any hope to be found, then the God of mercy, the God of mercy would actually have to come and to live in our trenches and save us and deliver us."

And don't you see the good news is what Ecclesiastes does in telling us that the only hope you and I are ever going to have is beyond the sun, is beyond the trench, is that the rest of the Bible tells us that's precisely what God did. He sent his son to this earth to live with us. He walked right down here with us in order to pay the penalty of our sin, to remove that sin in order to bring us home.

And not only did he send his son, but he gave us a Bible. And the Bible tells us that it's written for us that we would become wise, to guide us through this life. Proverbs 2:6 says, the Lord gives wisdom and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Sometimes you see these three words. They're oftentimes put together in the wisdom books of the Old Testament. Wisdom, knowledge, understanding. They look like they're the same but they're not. They're like close cousins. Okay?

The first level is knowledge, and that is people know things or they don't know things. Let's just put it into two different categories. Okay? There are some people in this room or at home who know Jesus is the Christ and who know it is good to forgive. The Bible tells us to forgive. Okay? So one thing to know, one thing to

practice, knowledge is about knowing things.

Then we move to understanding. Understanding is about comprehending how the knowledge works in life. And so, when it comes to faith in Jesus Christ, what that means is a person of knowledge knows he is the son of God. A person of understanding knows why it's important to trust the son of God. A person of knowledge knows the Bible says forgive, but a person of understanding knows how to forgive and knows the implications of forgiving and not forgiving.

But then we move a step further. And this is where the Bible wants to get us. This is where God wants to get us and that's wisdom. And what wisdom is, is applying the truth of God. You see, if you know that Jesus is the son of God and if you have understanding and you can comprehend why it's important to trust him, and yet you never actually put your faith in him, you may be knowledgeable and understanding, but you are not wise.

You may know that you need to forgive, you may understand why you need to forgive, but until you forgive you and I we are not wise. And so, what he does here in Ecclesiastes chapter 10, a pretty strange chapter, to be honest. I'd say that frequently over the last few months, haven't I? Pretty strange chapter, it is.

What Solomon wants to do is show us five benefits of wisdom here in the trenches that is made available by what we're going to do in a moment. And that is that Jesus Christ came to die on the cross where he gave his life and he shed his blood so that we could have hope. So, the first benefit that we find is this, is that wisdom protects our honor. Wisdom protects our honor. Everyone in this room and everyone at home wants to be remembered for being honorable and yet every one of us have the ability and capacity within us to ruin every good thing in our life in about five minutes.

Every one of us has what is needed to live a dishonorable life that would actually outweigh years of wisdom and honor. And this is precisely where he goes. Look at verse one. If you have a Bible with you, look there. If not, it's right here up on the screen. He says, "Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench; so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor."

So, we need to understand the first in order to understand the second because of this little word so. So what does he mean? The dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench. What he's saying is this, a little of the wrong thing in life can outweigh a lot of the right thing. True?

And so, in the ancient world, those who had means and wealth, they had ointment, perfume, it smelled good. But they wouldn't wipe it on themselves necessarily, they would put it in a bowl, they'd put it in the room. And all of a sudden that aroma would fill the room. But they had a problem. And that is sometimes flies would land in that ointment.

What he's saying here is this, is that you may have an entire bowl of ointment, of perfume and one little fly that dies within it. And the lesser tends to compromise the greater as opposed to the perfume turning the fly into a diamond. Now, we don't do a whole lot with perfume and flies. We do soup and flies. So let's just say you go out to your local restaurant and you order soup and all of a sudden it comes out and there's a fly in your soup, right?

The soup, it may be amazing soup, but it doesn't turn, it doesn't outweigh, it doesn't turn that fly into a fruit-on that you get to eat with it, right? No. What do we do? Even though the majority of the soup is not touched by the fly, we send it back. We don't eat it. We don't go, "Most of this soup is not even touching it, so I'll eat everything around where the fly is at. "No, we'd send it back.

And this is what he's saying. He's saying, in the same way, a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor. What does that mean? It means one hour of folly can spoil a decade of honor. Solomon's own dad probably taught him this. You look through the scriptures and what you find is that his dad, his name is David. It's an amazing thing, God almighty one day, God almighty, literally looked upon the earth and he says, "You see that guy right there, that is a man after my own heart."

Now, that is a compliment. God almighty ever looks down at you and he says, "You see that person right there, that person right there loves me, he loves my heart, has a heart just like my heart." That's varsity level right there. Okay? That's what you want. He lives with honor. The vast majority of his life is just this wisdom and honor. And yet, in a moment of weakness, when he was overcome by lust, he actually slept with a woman who is married to another man, gets her pregnant and then kills her husband.

And now for the rest of time, every generation, you look at David, and it's interesting, everyone has to do this. Man after his own heart, really bad weekend, but a man after his own heart. One moment in time outweighed an enormous amount of honor and wisdom. Now, the hope, and we need hope, don't we? Because most of us, we heard that and we're like, "Well, all right. I'm out." Right? Because we've all done things. Everyone has. That's why Jesus came. It's because we're not honorable.

Not only do we have the capacity to spoil significant things in our life, we have spoiled significant things in our life because we've lived dishonorably. That's why we need Jesus Christ. And yet, I want you to know something. In God's economy, there's another powerful thing. You don't see it here within Ecclesiastes, but you see it in the rest of the Bible. I don't want to say right now so that you don't walk out of here hopeless. And that is that even though it's true that folly outweighs a tremendous amount of honor, repentance can outweigh folly.

I remember a few years ago I went to a marriage retreat here at Providence. Very first night everyone's introducing themselves. And there's a man here at Providence who's at the last service, a man of honor, he loves the Lord, loves his wife, faithful, just godly man. I mean, real godly man. And he says something foolish in

front of everybody that disparaged his own marriage. Everyone knew he was joking, and so we really didn't think too much about it.

I didn't think anything about it, to be honest, until the next morning when we come back for the next session and he had asked, "Hey, can I say something?" And he stands up in front of everybody. And he says, "I want you to know that I was wrong. One of the greatest gifts of my entire life is being married to my wife. And I said something that compromised that reality, it's not true."

I have no idea anything that was said that weekend. I know who taught. And I know it was good stuff, but I don't remember any of it today. But I do remember that repentance outweighed folly. And it's true for your life as well. Look to the Lord, he can restore.

He goes on though. And because he knows that we all are at risk. Like some of you right now, I know. I just know. Some of you are an afternoon away from destroying your life. There are people listening right now who are about to make decisions, who have been contemplating decisions for a week that if you act on it, it will destroy your honor.

And so, what do we do with that? Well, we keep reading. Look at verse two. He says, "A wise man's heart inclines into the right, but a fool's heart to the left." Now I know some of you are already thinking, "Oh man, Solomon was a Republican, see?" He wasn't. Has nothing to do with politics. Okay? Let me tell you what this means. Okay? Let me tell you what this means.

For whatever reason, I don't know why, but the vast majority of humanity throughout time has been right hand dominant. Right? What that means is we're right-hand strong. And so, when we say things like, I know some of you, you're the exception. Unfortunately, there's less of you. Okay? Which is why it's the exception. Right? But you hear statements such as, "You know what? I could beat you with my left hand." What does that mean? It means I could take your strength with my weakness.

When we talk about right-hand dominant, the right and the left, the right is actually a portrait of strength. It's a foundation of strength. And you see this throughout the scriptures, right? Where is Jesus today? Is he at the left hand of the father or is he the right hand of the father? He's at the right-hand of the father.

When David talks about his relationship with God almighty in Psalm 16, notice what he says. Psalm 16:8, "He, God, is at my right hand; I will not be shaken." Right? It's this metaphor on the right, it's a place of strength. And so, what he means when he says that a wise man's heart inclines him to the right but a fool's heart to the left. What he means is this, is that a heart that is ruled by God's wisdom, it leans toward, it's inclined toward a strong foundation, but a foolish person's heart is inclined toward, it leans toward weak foundations.

Now, have you ever heard anything about rock and sand in the Bible? You remember what Jesus said? It talks about it in the context of wise people and foolish people. In Matthew 7:24, he says everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And then the story goes on and he says, "Look, the rains come down and floods go up and his house is secure, his life is secure because it's founded on the rock."

But then he goes on and it's not on the screen. But in verse 26 he says, "But then everyone then who hears these words of mine and doesn't do them is like a fool who built his house, his life, upon the sand, the rains came and the floods came up and suddenly great was the crash of his life." And what Solomon says is this, is that when we build on sand, our crash is predictable. So, how do we know that? Look at verse three. "Even when the fool walks on the road, he lacks sense and he says to everyone that he's a fool."

See what he's saying? Most of you know about this, you have a friend, they're doing something and you're looking and you're like, "This is not going to end. This is not going to end well," right? Folly. It's self-evident this is about to be a train wreck. And this is precisely what he's saying here. And of course, Solomon, this is grandpa Solomon. He's looking at you and me and he goes, "I know you have everything in you just like I to ruin every good thing in your life in a matter of moments."

And so, listen to me. Don't emulate my life, learn my lesson. So, what can we do? Let me encourage us to trust God by pursuing self-control. God loves to be trusted. He says that without faith, it's impossible to please him. So, we need to understand what is self-control. Self control is simply, is the ability to control urgent desires for important desires.

You may have an important desire to be healthy. And this afternoon you may have an urgent desire to eat four pieces of fried chicken and two desserts. Self-Control says, "You know what? I am going to be governed by importance as opposed to urgency." Some of you want to have a healthy marriage. Some of you want to be faithful to your spouse. You want to give your heart not only to your spouse, but also to a biblical view of beauty and love.

There's going to be a temptation that creates this urgent desire in your life to look at pornography. Self-control says important things first. And if urgent things hurt important things, urgent things must go. It's self-control. What happens if you don't have any self-control? Well, Solomon says it this way in Proverbs 25, 28, "A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls."

What does that mean? City broken into is a disaster that's already happened and it's left without walls, which means it's waiting another disaster. What that means is this, is that if you lack self-control in a particular area, not only does it eat your lunch today, but it's going to eat your lunch tomorrow. Self-Control. Important things over urgent things. So what do we do? Because we're all in this battle together. We all want things that aren't good for us.

Well, the Bible says this, you got to run to Jesus Christ. You see, in ancient times, if the city wall was broken by an invading army, there was a last stand, there was a tower. There was a last tower that all of the inhabitants could run to and be safe within that tower, at least for a period of time. And notice what Solomon says in Proverbs 18:10. He says, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous man runs into it and is safe."

We have to trust Jesus Christ, but then God presses us even further. And he says, "I need you to expand your love for what is right." And this is why, this is so important that you understand this if you want to be a person of self-control, is that self-control is no longer self control if you love. If you love personal health, you are motivated to be self-controlled in that area. Isn't that true?

Love turns the need for self-control into desire. That's why in verse two, and he says that the wise man's heart inclines to the right. What does that mean? It means his heart wants a strong foundation. It's a whole lot easier to build your life on a strong foundation when you want to. It doesn't take self-control it just takes action. Now there's no battle because this is what I want to do. This is why John in 1st John 5 he says, "For people who love God, obeying the Bible is not a burden." What does that mean? It means you don't have to have self-control if it's what you want to do. It's love.

Remember Jacob in the Bible, some of you are like, "No, I've never heard of Jacob." Well, there's this guy, his name is Jacob. And he falls in love with this woman named Rachel. He goes, "I want to marry this woman." But the ingredients that were put before him, he says, "This is what you got to do, you got to work seven years in the field, harsh circumstances. But when you do, you'll be able to marry her." And notice what the Bible says. "They seem to him but a few days because of the love he had for her."

And so, when you are lacking self-control, there's an urgent desire in your life you know is destructive, but it's staring you down in the face and you're like, "Okay, I need help." First you trust Christ as your savior. You've already done that. Then this is what you do. You go to the Lord and you say, "God, I have desires right now in my heart that are facing me that if acted upon would ruin every good thing in my life. It may ruin my joy, my marriage, my family. It might ruin my testimony as a believer in Jesus Christ."

"So, I'm not only asking you to give me strength, but what I ultimately want is this, would you help me to love you more? Would you help me to love my family more? Would you help me to love honor all the more so that years of faithfulness feel like just a few days."

This is the path to honor. And it's a path we all must take because we all have the seeds of dishonor in our heart. The second benefit of wisdom that he talks about is that wisdom produces endurance. Most of us in our life we've quit something in our life. There's been something we've put our hands to. And then for whatever reason, we stopped doing it. I remember years ago sitting at a campsite, it was in front of a campfire sitting next to a man I hardly knew. And suddenly, it was a trip with the Scouts and oh boy, they were all

playing. We were just sitting there and he just said, without invitation, he goes, you know what? I have a regret. Oh, we went there real fast. Okay.

And so a campfire regret. What's your regret? He said, "Do you know what? I was in the Scouts and I finished everything, including my Eagle project. I had half of a merit badge left and I quit." Since we're there, I said, "Can I ask you a question about that?" And I said, "Why did you quit?" You know what he said? It was fascinating. He goes, "Well, the leader got mad at me for something I did. And then I got mad at him and I said, 'I now have a driver's license, I'm out of here.'"

I said, "What does that have to do anything?" Well, look at verse four, "If the anger of a ruler rises against you, do not leave your place, for calmness will lay great offenses to rest." Sometimes people get angry with us and then we get angry with them and suddenly we quit something that was important to us that maybe we even wished that we would have finished.

And in this world, it's so crazy that in the trenches that we get tempted to quit or to just disengage all the time. So, look what verse five to seven says he goes, "I get it." Let me just show you how backwards life is. He goes, "There's an evil that I've seen under the sun, as it were an error proceeding from the ruler. Folly is set in many high places," see what that says? Folly, people who are foolish, they get the best seats.

And the rich, they sit in low place. And then he goes further. He goes, "I've seen slaves on horses and princes walking on the ground like slaves." These are simply metaphors of saying, in this world, in the trenches, everything's broken and backwards. Sin is exalted as courageous and truth is condemned as arrogant, socialites, who literally have displayed no known skill, they become celebrities that make millions of dollars, and social workers that help kids who have been abused find another safe place, they live on pennies.

Teachers get thousands and actors get millions. And sometimes what happens is when we see the backwardness of the world, we say, "You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to gather up all my end time posters, my family, and some garden seeds and I'm going to live up in some caves somewhere. I'm out of here." And Solomon says, "Don't leave your post."

And so Providence let's trust God and stand at our posts. When life tempts you to flee, look to God and stay where he has told you to stay. Think this is great advice. If you ever get to the place where you just don't know what to do, do the last thing you are absolutely certain you heard God tell you to do and stay there until you hear something just as certain. Stay there. Finish. Don't run from your Bible. Don't run from your family. Don't run from your commitments. Don't run from your community of people.

Psalm 37:3 says, trust in the Lord, do good, dwell in the land, befriend faithfulness, look to Jesus Christ and wait for wisdom's eventual triumph. It will come. Amen.

The third benefit, he says, of wisdom, in the trenches the wisdom helps us succeed. And you see this in verses eight through 11. A lot of us think if I'm just strong enough at something, then I'm going to succeed. And Solomon comes in and he goes, "You know what? You can be a really strong fool." And so, strength isn't everything. Let me show you how he gets there. Okay?

Verse eight, watch this. "He who digs a pit will fall into it. And a serpent will bite him who breaks through a wall. He who quarries stones is hurt by them and he who splits logs is endangered by them. If the iron is blunt and one does not sharpen the edge, he must use more strength, but wisdom helps one to succeed."

Now, you see what he's saying there? He's saying, "Look, you're a really strong person you can dig a pit, but if you have wisdom, you won't fall into it." Strong people can pull down a wall, but it's a wise person that makes sure that when they're going through the rebel, that there's not a snake in there. Strong people can cut down a tree. True? If you're strong you can cut down a tree. A wise person though, learns to sharpen the ax and pays attention to where that tree might fall.

You see, strength without wisdom is simply strong folly. And then he goes on. He wants one more example to make his point. I love this. "If the servant bites before it's charmed, there is no advantage to the charmer." Now, snake charming is a pretty unique thing in the world. Isn't it? If you're like, "What is the snake charm?" I thought about doing it, but I'd have to show a cobra and there's so many people that are so terrified of snakes that I'll just tell you about it.

There's these people in the world. Who's never seen these? You've seen cartoons, but it's real, right? A guy will come, a little marketplace and he'll have a little basket and he'll put it down, and he'll sit down, and he'll take the lid off. And there's a cobra in his basket. Little head comes up and he's like, "Hey, what's up? Where are all the..." Now I got to do something with a snake that's out there.

And so he gets his little flute. He's blowing his little flute and the snake somehow, right? It's a unique knowledge. It's a skillset that I don't have that people really do have. They know how to get this snake to get in this trance where they go up and they'll kiss this snake around the lips. I'm like, "You got to be kidding me."

And Solomon knows, everyone knows this example, but then he also knows that everyone's a little bit afraid of getting bit. So this is what he says, the veteran charmer who has all the knowledge of how to charm the snake, he may have it all, but if he has bit before he applies his knowledge, then he is worse off than the rookie who knows not how to charm a snake.

And you take that and there's a million different examples. He who has a Bible and never reads it is no better than the one who's never seen a Bible. He who knows the Bible says forgive but will not forgive is no better than the person who doesn't even know they're supposed to forgive. This is what he's talking about, wisdom must be applied for there to be true success in life.

So, let's trust God and apply what we know, whatever it is that you know. Is there anything right now that you know for certain you're supposed to be doing but you have not applied that knowledge and understanding into wisdom? Let me encourage you right now, this week begin to apply it.

The fourth benefit that he tells us is that wisdom forms life-giving words, life-giving words, everywhere. Around the whole world, people are lost in the series of endless trenches, trying to find home, and everybody's wondering how to get there, and everyone's trying to give directions like, "Hey, I've been down here, don't go there. I think it's this way." And all of a sudden, people are just walking around looking at where is hope in the world?

And what he says is this, everybody down in the trenches, they're also talking. He says, "There's a difference between what wise people talk about and what fool's talk about." So, let's talk about it. Verse 12, "The words of the wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him."

The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness and the end of his talk is evil madness. What does that mean? It means, the beginning of his sentence is foolish and it never gets any better, and that's what he says. "A fool multiplies words, though no man knows what is to be and who can tell him what will be after him? What that means is this, the foolish person, he talks so much, even though he knows not what's happening today or tomorrow. The toil of a fool wearies him for he does not know the way to the city."

In other words, the fool is utterly lost in the world, has no idea how to get to the city and yet keeps talking and giving direction, but the words of the wise win him favor. And do you know the wise words? Why the words of the wise win that man favor, or that woman favor? It's because Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

In other words, those who fear God enough to look to his son are given eternal life and the good news to help other people find the city of God. The application I have, I have to race through this, is this, is let's trust... I know it's wordy, but I chose every word intentionally. Okay? So, let's trust God and allow the gospel to be the legacy of our mouth. Whatever you talk most about is what people remember that you talk most about. Whatever you talked loudest about, whatever you talked most passionately about is what everybody in your life is going to say. "You know what? That person was really passionate about this." And as believers in Jesus Christ we have the word of God. And because we have the word of God, we can speak into any life circumstance.

But God forbid that our greatest vocal legacy these days be about lesser things like face masks and elections when we alone know the way to the city of God. Amen.

Jesus Christ came to this earth to die for our sin. And he did, and he was buried, and he rose from the dead. And everyone who trusts in him are forgiven of their sin and given eternal life and promised access to the city of God. We know the way to the city. Now, let me ask you something, you look at what you've said, what you've written, what you posted, are people in this world right now most convinced the thing you're most passionate about is Jesus Christ?

I don't see many people leaving legacies this day of the gospel. Say what you want to say about anything you want to say, the solution to our problems includes Jesus. So, you got to add him. He has to be a part of the solution if we want to speak on the stage of humanity and give wisdom to help people get home. And so, we're Jesus' people through and through.

The fifth benefit before we take the supper is wisdom distinguishes our leadership. Everyone knows that when you're in a trench and you're in a bad place, it's really good to have good leaders. Look at what he says verse 16 and 17. He says, "Woe to you, O land, when you're king is a child and your princes feast in the morning. Happy are you, O land, when your king is the son of the nobility and your princes feast at the proper time for strength and not for drunkenness!"

What does that mean? It means woe to a people whose leaders act like kids and party before they've done any work. And happy are those whose leaders are marked by character nobility, self-control. They eat in order to get strong so they can serve and not get drunk. Then he goes on and he goes, "That's not the case most times."

Verse 18 and 19, "Through sloth," that's laziness, "The roof sinks in and through indolence," that's idleness, "The house leaks. Bread is made for laughter and wine gladdens life and money answers everything." What does that mean? It means not only do foolish leaders let their roof sink in from laziness, the roof of their home, their marriage or culture itself, but their only answer for the difficult issues of life is to eat, drink and spend money they don't have.

You think, "Man, Solomon sure did know a lot about culture." It's because he knew what it was like to be a fallen leader, I believe. And sometimes when we get into this moment where you look into the world today and you think... and we got an election in just a few months that I know I'm not looking forward to it. We're definitely in the trenches.

And so, Solomon gives us one piece of advice knowing that things are busted up when it comes to leadership in the world. He says, "Even in your thoughts, do not curse the king, nor in your bedroom curse the rich, for a bird of the air will carry your voice, or some winged creature tell the matter." In other words, don't use your tongue that was given to you by God to bless God and bless image-bearers to curse leaders and bosses that were also made in his image. So, let's trust God by respecting our authorities.

And you know, one of the reasons that we can trust God and respect our authorities is because we know that the ultimate authority, the king of the earth is going to come back, and he is going to make all things right. He's going to remove all the tears and all the brokenness and all of the sin. He's going to remove death. And it says that from his throne will drip peace, and righteousness, and justice. It's coming. Our leader is coming.

And when you think about what he has made available for us, when you think about Jesus Christ himself, think about these five things. Is there anyone that you know in the history of the world who has a more honorable name than the name of Jesus Christ? No way, is there anybody in the world ever who has endured a more difficult task in order to bring about good and he didn't quit, and he didn't go back to heaven going, "You know, I had good intentions, I just didn't pull it off?"

No, there's nobody who's ever finished a harder task than Jesus Christ dying on a cross. There is nobody in the history of the world who has ever navigated life more successfully because he applied wisdom to everyday life. And there's nobody who walked the face of this earth and gave life-giving words like Jesus Christ. And there is no leader in the history of the world who's ever stood on this earth or in the world to come who more capably used his strength to serve his people. Because he did, we can be saved.

So, before we take the super, this is what we're going to do. I'm going to give you a moment right now. The Bible says we're supposed to do this to remember what he did, to proclaim our hope in what he did, but also to give us a moment to say, "Wait a minute, before I take this, I need to confess my sin." So take a moment right now where you're at and make sure your conscience is clear by confessing your sin to the Lord.



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