

# Wisdom and the Fear of God

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Date: 09 July 2017

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[ 0 : 00 ] We've just finished up, I gather, a series in the book of Acts, looking at how Jesus sends his people out on mission.

And this mission is really what defines the church. And it's what we're kind of, we're to be part of this mission to go and reach out into the world and to just build these communities which are living in this transformational way which just shows this light to the people around us.

But one of the things that I have realized as I've reflected on this kind of big story that we're part of as a church is that often in the day-to-day of life, I kind of get distracted.

Anyone else like me? I kind of get sidetracked from that big story because there are little decisions, there are things which happen in my day-to-day which actually affect the direction that I'm going in.

But it's the day-to-day stuff that just wraps me up. And so we're looking at this kind of series in wisdom because wisdom here is going to be looking at the choices and the forks in the road that we have in our everyday lives and the nitty-gritty of life to see how when we make wise choices in these things like money and relationships and career and plans and all these different things, that these things are what shape our vision of the bigger picture that we're in and the direction we're going in.

[ 1 : 24 ] So for the next eight weeks, we're going to be looking in the book of Proverbs and looking at different topics and looking at wisdom in different areas. So we're just going to kind of intro that a little bit today and then we're going to go on this journey over the summer.

Okay? Good. Let me just pray for us before we dive in. Father, thank you for giving us breath today.

Thank you that today was a day that you made. And it's a day that you have brought us here, not just to be here because this is what we always do, but it's a day because we want to hear your word and you want to speak to us.

And I pray, Lord, give us tender, soft hearts to hear what you want to say. I pray, Lord, that your spirit would speak through my words. Remove what you don't want to say and let people hear like a megaphone what you do want them to hear.

Let us live in the light of your word. In Jesus' name. Amen. Great. What I want to do to start off with is I want to do a little kind of trivia quiz for us.

[ 2 : 41 ] Okay? So are you ready? So I'm going to give you some choices. Okay? I want some responses. This is kind of audience participation. Okay? I know we're lower on numbers because it's the sum of it.

That doesn't mean you get a pass. Okay. Here's your first choice. Would you prefer to have intelligence or good looks? Come on.

There's no sitting on the fence here. No sitting on the fence. Good looks. There you go. I'm sure you've already got them. Okay.

Next one. A penthouse flat or a luxury yacht. Oh, okay.

Nobody's into the sea. Okay. Next one. A trip to the moon or unlimited beach days. Okay.

[ 3 : 37 ] You guys are safe here. You kind of, okay. Private chef. That's Gordon Ramsay for you. A professional trainer. There's a bit of competition here.

Okay. Next one. A hundred million dollars. Or wisdom. There's one honest man in the congregation.

Because you see, though you might not have exactly all those choices every day, the choices that you make reflect what you think is most valuable in life.

Right? What you think will secure your greatest happiness is what will determine and shape the choices that every day you are making. See, if you think your money or career or intelligence or education will make you happiest in life, then that's what's going to consume the whole of your direction in life.

It will shape all of your choices. But when we come to looking at the book of Proverbs, we're looking at a book which is a collection of collections of sayings of wise people, the most significant of whom is King Solomon.

[ 5 : 00 ] And if you know who King Solomon is, he was the wisest king in the world. And the kind of backdrop to the story about King Solomon is that his dad, the greatest king that Israel had ever had, King David, has died.

King Solomon takes the throne as a young man. And God comes to him in a dream and says, ask me for anything you want. You know, he has that choice of all of those different things.

And Solomon says, without a blink of an eye, he says, give me wisdom. Give me wisdom. Give me wisdom more than anything else. Give me wisdom. And God says, you have chosen wisely.

Because you see, he knows that if I got that \$100 million, I could still be a fool and squander it all. But if I have wisdom, I have something which is going to be shaping everything in my life.

And so the book of Proverbs, basically, is going to come to us and it's going to say, with a question, it's going to say, what do you want in your life? What is most valuable in your life?

[ 6 : 09 ] What's the destination that you want to go into? Because here now, it is a father talking to a son and he's going to say, hey, listen, this is the destination.

Are you going to listen to me? Are you going to hear where I want you to go? And so Proverbs 8, verse 1 to 5. Do have your bulletin open. I'm going to kind of refer to it during this morning.

Proverbs 8, 1 to 5. It says, wisdom, wisdom, does not wisdom call? Okay, does not understanding raise her voice on the heights beside the way.

And then it says, at the crossroads, she takes her stand beside the gates in front of the town. At the entrance of the portals, she cries aloud. Basically, this passage starts off at the busy intersection of a city.

And here is wisdom on the heights where people are going along their way, choosing the lifestyles they want to live. It's beside the gates of the crossroads of the city where decisions, whether you're going to go left or whether you're going to go right, are being made.

[ 7 : 18 ] It's right at the gates of the city, of the town, where all the buying and selling and the trading and the political judgments and the work decisions are being made.

Choices everywhere. Okay, big choices. Who do I marry? What job do I take? What profile picture do I put on Facebook?

Or smaller, everyday choices, like, do I shout at my kids or say nothing? Do I make that phone call or do I let it be? Do I pursue that relationship, that school, or do I wait?

All these choices you and I face every single day. And this is the context where he's saying you're at the crossroads of these choices. And right in the midst of all the noise, of all the voices which are coming from your friends and your family and your colleagues and the media and everything around you, wisdom calls.

And wisdom is personified as this kind of beautiful, noble woman. And she says, calling out to you and me, she says, listen to my voice.

[ 8 : 34 ] Hear, listen to me. Verse 10, take my instruction instead of silver and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than jewels. And all that you desire, all that you desire cannot compare with her. That's a pretty big statement.

Advertising sells you products on the basis of your greatest desires and fantasies and promises to fulfill them. Have you seen these adverts like, get this deodorant and suddenly you'll become irresistibly attractive to the opposite sex?

Have you seen those kind of adverts? And, you know, we believe it because we buy it. Right? And that's how advertising works. And we also believe the advertising which plays to the different kind of fantasies that we have about what makes us happy.

Like, if I just had well-behaved children, then my life would be happy. If I just had a boyfriend, then life would be wonderful. And we get this kind of wisdom from everywhere else.

[ 9 : 42 ] And when the Bible comes and brings this call of wisdom that is different from all the other wisdoms that you'll hear around, sometimes we can think it sounds like a very sensible Christian middle-aged aunt who is so sensible that she'd never do anything exciting at all in her life.

She just sounds a little bit boring, sometimes we think, when we think about biblical wisdom. But Proverbs here, it's very clever the way he does it. Proverbs is us listening into this father and his son talking to each other.

And do you know what? In chapter 9, his father says to his son, basically he says, Wisdom isn't your dull aunt who wouldn't even get a tattoo because she's not that fun.

Wisdom is a hot lady who's a great chef. That's what he says. Wisdom is a hot lady who's a great chef. And why does he do that? Because he's talking to a teenage son, okay?

And he's playing to the desires that he has. And if you translate that into any of your fantasies, any of the things that you think will make you happy, he's saying, listen, if you want anything that's going to satisfy what you're chasing after, get wisdom.

[ 10 : 52 ] That's what he's saying. And he's appealing to our desires. So, Proverbs, we're going to go on this journey together about getting wisdom.

Proverbs. Proverbs. Just to orient you a little bit, Proverbs comes out of four. There are four wisdom books in the Bible, in the Hebrew Bible. Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Proverbs.

And basically, they're like a package deal together. They're kind of all different threads, which if you take them together, they form a tapestry of what life is like. And you need to read them together.

But the way Proverbs works is Proverbs is basically quite a lot of one-liners and catchy phrases which kind of encapsulate a truth, okay? So, we understand the idea of Proverbs and things like that.

Maybe let's just have a look. Here are some modern kind of, okay, modern pictorial versions of Proverbs. Proverbs, okay? Learning from the wise.

[ 11 : 53 ] Okay? It's a kid with a son, with his dad teaching him how to use a computer. Next one. Smart communication isn't always the smartest communication.

Okay? It's a catchy phrase, but you get the idea, right? Next one. The most valuable thing handed down the generation's togetherness.

Okay? You get the idea? The way to a dad's heart is through his stomach. Okay? You get the idea. We have these ideas of Proverbs in the world, right?

Collective wisdom. Was there another one? I think that was it. Oh, yes. Okay. What goes around comes around. Okay?

These are Proverbs that we understand the concepts, but they're giving us not everything about the topic, but they're giving you something that's memorable for you to chew on. Okay?

[ 12 : 53 ] So what we're going to look at, these wisdoms have come through observation, experience of what works in life. So we're going to look at this idea of wisdom through three things. We're going to look at the meaning of wisdom, the way to wisdom, and the call of wisdom.

Okay? The meaning of wisdom, the way to wisdom, and the call of wisdom. Okay. So if you look through the passage, you will keep hearing that the passage just keeps talking about wisdom.

But what is wisdom? Okay? Let's tell you what wisdom isn't first. Wisdom is not intelligence or education. In Hong Kong, we prize education.

We might say, take education instead of silver. Okay? Instead of our money. Because education will get more silver eventually. Some of us think the most valuable thing you can give to your children is education.

Now, education is important, but Proverbs says that's not true. Education is not the most important thing. Going to a seminary doesn't teach you actually how to be a pastor.

[ 13 : 54 ] You could have a ton of PhDs and not know how to do life at all. Right? The most brilliant, well-read, intelligent people I know, some of them have train wreck in their relationships.

Some of them just have no idea, how to do relationships. But they're smart. And Proverbs would say, wisdom is not just education or intelligence. It's also not just morality.

Okay? Wisdom is intrinsically connected to doing and acting in a right way. In a right way which fits in the way God has ordered the world. But it's far more than just right or wrong.

You know, in England in the 1650s, it's very interesting. They thought that if we get the most moral people in the country together and we make them into the parliament, then the country would just run amazingly.

So they did this. It's called the bare bones parliament. And can you imagine what happened? They got all these kind of very moral people and put them in the parliament. And it was a disaster. Because morality is not the same as wisdom.

[ 14 : 58 ] And wisdom is not going to, morality is not the only way that you can learn to live life. The Bible word for wisdom is the word chokmah.

Okay? Can you say that? Chokmah. It's like you're clearing your throat. Okay? That's the only bit of Hebrew I'm going to give you. Okay? Chokmah. Okay? In Exodus, it's applied to those who've got the skill of crafting wood and crafting silver and gold.

It's the skill of knowing how to do something well. And in the Bible, it's not just, you know, you could have the skill of, if you know how to do a successful business, you have business chokmah.

Okay? You've got the skill of doing it well. But in the Bible, it's more than just doing something with a bit of know-how. It's actually knowing how to do relationships. It's knowing, it's the skill of living well in God's world and in relationships, doing relationships well with God, with your family, and with the people around you.

That's what chokmah is. It's in the complexity of life where, you know, so much is not black and white. So much of life is just gray. Right? Isn't so much just gray where you don't know the way to go.

[ 16 : 06 ] And chokmah is the way of taking biblical truth and applying it into your life in a way which helps you to live in the marketplace. of life. You know, it's, I've had many of these decisions where I don't know, I have two choices and both of them seem okay.

You know, when Fiona and I, when Fiona and I wanted to get married, Fiona's parents refused. What do you do in that situation?

Honor your father and mother is a biblical command. Don't be a slave to the fear of men is another biblical command. Two things. They both seem right.

What do you do? What do I need? Google it? No. I need chokmah. I need wisdom. It's the same as if you have, you know, you've got a kid who's rebellious, rebelling against your authority.

Two different things. Do you need love and grace and forgiveness? Or do you need discipline and justice? Both of them are good things. What do you do? Chokmah.

[ 17 : 06 ] You need it. And so it's the way of getting knowledge so you understand the way things generally work in the world. It's seeing your present situation clearly and it's having a strategy for knowing how to navigate the gray all in God's world so that you can do relationships right.

That is chokmah. But I find in the issue of guidance, many people come to me and I think we have a wrong view of how God guides in life.

Okay? I have many people say, I want to know what God's will for my life is. How do I know if this job is God's will for my life? You know, we're very afraid of getting it wrong.

You know, if we make something wrong, we think of life like a doorway. You know, the journey of life is a door rather than a path. And so what we have is if I choose the wrong door, then I'm afraid I'm going to screw up the rest of my life and I go through the wrong one and I go, oh, I should have chosen the other one and we're going to miss out.

That's how we feel in life often. And so you have like door A, B, C in front of you. You know, it could be three jobs. And I have people come to me and say, what job does God want me to take?

[ 18 : 22 ] And I'll say to them, well, are any of them terrorism? And they say, no, generally. Kidnapping, drug smuggling. And they say, okay, no.

If the answer is yes, we might have to chat about it. But they say, but I want to know what God wants. And I say, well, it's not here a moral choice. It's not a sin issue.

It's a wisdom issue. It's a chokmah issue. But we struggle with this, I think, because we like to have the idea of a kind of a door which you just open and that's the way you go. And God to kind of give a little pointy finger just saying it's that door.

And, you know, we want an instant solution. We want an instant solution. You know, 10 steps to raising your kids. This is how, you look at the how-to manuals outside. It's all like, okay, follow these 10 steps and boom, the door will open.

Right? Five ways to a better body. Okay? Six ways to greater intelligence. All those different things. That's what we like. And so we have Christian versions of those as well. We say things like, just pray and get some peace.

[ 19 : 26 ] And if you have peace, then that's the way forward. Now, prayer is essential as part of this. Because we've got to depend on God. Sense of peace is good.

But, you know, in the Bible, Saul had a great sense of peace when he was having Christians martyred. Right? Right? And I've heard people come to me who've said, I've prayed about joining a church and I just didn't have peace about it so I didn't join a church.

And I'm going, okay, sounds like you're listening to yourself there. You're not listening to God. Right? Or other people will say, okay, follow the open doors. Now, sometimes that's a good idea.

But, you know, Jonah in the Bible got an open door to run away from God to go to Tarshish. You know, he goes to the ship ticket office and he says, hey, are there any tickets for Tarshish?

And they say, yes, there are. And he says, wow, it's a sign, an open door. Really? You know, I've had doors which seem to open and suddenly they were slammed in my face and then I thought, God, what are you playing at?

[ 20 : 28 ] I thought that was you. Right? And we get confused. Anyone been there? Another one is like, the Holy Spirit told me.

Now, I believe very strongly that the Spirit does and has in my life prompted me in numerous ways. We're going to talk about this later, later in the year.

But, I believe God uses our intuitions to guide us. But here's a very important thing we need to be careful of. Don't ascribe your gut the same authority as God's Word.

Okay? Because I had a guy who was, he was convinced the Holy Spirit had told him to be a worship music leader. Okay? And you know what the Holy Spirit tells you? You can't argue with that.

Right? You can't argue with anyone who says, God told me. It's like, okay. So, he goes to the worship music practice and let me just tell you, if the Holy Spirit had called him, he had called him as a sign of judgment on whoever he was going to sing to.

[ 21 : 34 ] Because he lacked chokmah. But this is some of the ways that we misunderstand how God wants us to operate in the world. We want a plug and play formula. Life is more complex than that.

And God is more relational than just dishing out a kind of how-to guide. God wants a relationship with you and in a relationship, chokmah comes.

So let's come to look at, that's what chokmah is. Chokmah is the skill of living well in a complex world to know how to do relationships well and it's in God's world.

Let me say, how do we get wisdom? How do we get this chokmah? The way to wisdom. Okay? That's point two. If you want to just show, there are many ways that people think about getting wisdom.

Confucius said this, three methods we may learn wisdom. First, by reflection. Second, imitation. And third, by experience. There is some wisdom in that.

[ 22 : 47 ] There is some wisdom in that. And we could talk about many of those different things and the Bible would agree with some of those areas. But the Bible and Proverbs is going to tell us there's something that Confucius has missed out in his definition.

And Confucius has missed out what in chapter 9, verse 10, the book of Proverbs says is the beginning of wisdom. It says, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One is insight. That's weird. Right?

Just think how weird that is. The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom. Because we think fear is bad. Right? Generally. But what Proverbs and what the Bible shows us there are two types of fear you can have.

The first type of fear comes when you when you fear that you've messed up and your boss is going to shout at you. You're going to get punished for something.

[ 23 : 58 ] Have a look at this verse that Moses says. Exodus 20. Okay? God showed himself to the mountain to sinful people at Mount Sinai. They pull back terrified and Moses says and they say to Moses don't let God speak or we'll die.

And then Moses says this do not fear for God has come to test you that the fear of him may be before you that you may not sin. Do you see?

He says do not fear that you may fear. Do you get that? Two types of fear that he's talking about. The first is that fear the negative fear of punishment that brings many people including many of us to church to try and be very moral because we're worried that maybe if we don't do the right thing then God is going to smite us.

Right? That's often the motivation for much religion that we do. But that's not what he's talking about here. There's another kind of fear. That's the fear that the fear of him may be in you.

And have a look at the next verse. The next verse from Nehemiah. From Nehemiah he says this he says O Lord God of heaven the great and awesome God let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant to the prayer of your servants who delight who delight to fear your name.

[ 25 : 20 ] Who delight to fear your name. You see there's something awesomely terrifying about God. If you actually think about someone who can create the whole universe that is pretty terrifying.

But there's something that if you run to him the fear of him drives out all other fears. You can care less about what other people think because you care more about what he thinks.

You see there's delight and there's fear together. There's love and there's fear because there's beauty and greatness together in God. And what you love most is what you also fear hurting or losing or disappointing the most.

I mean it's a bit like if you've got a kid who Taylor Swift is like they're obsessed with Taylor Swift. Okay. And you suddenly they're walking down the street and they spot Taylor Swift in the corner like just standing there.

Now what emotions fill them? What's going through their mind? There's this mix of love and excitement and wanting to run up and say hi. But then there's also this mix of this fear and awe that someone who's so great in their eyes kind of comes before you and you're worried that you might say something stupid.

[ 26 : 34 ] You might do something stupid. You might say something which will lessen the greatness in which the presence you're in. And it's this sense of an awe-filled love for God that leaves you trembling before him but wanting to attract it and wanting to run to him.

Because we realize that God is God and I am not. Do you know that? God is God and you are not. And so the fear of the Lord is my definition. It's when I treasure God in his beauty and awesome majesty so much so that I do not want to do anything to displease him.

To treasure him so much that I don't want to, every day I'm going out I don't want to put anything else before you. I don't want anyone else to come before you because that's idolatry.

I don't want that. I want to treasure you before anything else. Now that kind of fear sets you free from everyone else's opinion. It sets you free from caring too much about what you think about yourself and you think about things.

You know so often I have been in so many arguments where I'm trying to prove myself to be right even though I know that I'm wrong because I just have to be right. Because I think more of myself and my opinion than other people.

[ 27 : 57 ] But fools think they know best. Fools think they know best. Do you notice in chapter 8 13 the fear of the Lord is the hatred of evil and then the first thing on the list is pride.

Okay. First thing on the list is pride. And what is pride? What's pride? Pride is thinking you know best. Pride is thinking you know best.

And I mean just think about it. Just take dating for example. Take dating. Some of us because we think we know best some of us are so picky we won't date anyone unless they're perfect for you.

Right. Unless you know according to your criteria and in your mind that makes sense. and so you complain about the lack of guys and the lack of girls here but you're passing out perfectly good godly guys and godly girls because you're looking for Scarlett Johansson or you're looking for somebody who's going to buy you a flat on the peak.

And that's foolish. That's not the real world. That's idolatry even. And the fear of the Lord sets you free from elevating your criteria and this idolatry of perfection and what you think above because you think that's what's going to satisfy you above fearing God and allowing him to then shape the reality of your world.

[ 29 : 33 ] And seeing that just frees you to actually see clearly and not stupidly. You know other people you'll date anyone whether they love Jesus or not.

And you know you say well there's no rule in the Bible that says about don't date and don't Christian. And it's true. Dating was invented in the 20th century. That's why it's not in the Bible. But if you have the fear of the Lord which is a command you don't want to date anyone who doesn't love Jesus because you don't want to go anywhere near there's something which will draw you away from you.

Draw you away from loving Jesus because you treasure him more than anything else. That's the fear of the Lord. And you know that counts of whether somebody is a non-Christian that counts as somebody whether says they're a Christian but isn't living a life that's following him.

And you know it'll save you so much regret and heartache later from making foolish decisions. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. How do you grow and get that wisdom?

That wisdom is a lifetime journey of getting in God's word allowing it to shape your life allowing it to shape your character and allowing wisdom to be the lens through which every sign of peace every sign of open door every sense of intuition everything else is shaped through that door.



[ 31 : 02 ] because sinful people like you and me we mess up continually we continually turn left instead of right but we should only we often should have that negative fear of God but we can only have that positive fear of God when you realize that in God's word he speaks this word of the gospel it says there's now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus which means you can be free from the negative fear to be free to love and fear him because you realize your identity is no longer at stake what others think about you is no longer the key thing what he thinks about you is the main thing in your life that's why let's do one more thing that's why if we want to be a wise community we need to be an awe-filled community and to be an awe-filled community we need to be a bible-soaked community because it's as we get in God's word that we get to know who God is and then as we rehearse that with each other that is going to guide us and lead us in the paths of life that we keep coming to the crossroads of life but it's not just a fear of God this way there's also this sense of if you're a fool you believe you know best and so you don't involve others in your decisions but if you notice proverbs 9 verse 8 says don't reprove a scoffer or he'll hate you reprove that means correct a wise man and he will love you give instruction to a wiser man and he will still be wiser what is he saying he's saying wisdom is also a community experience do you get that it's a community experience it's people growing together teaching each other and walking along together as they walk in the fear of God together because God the fear of God gives you a teachable humble spirit to realize that you don't know all the answers do you know people who think they know all the answers they're some of the most foolish people there are do you know why I know this because this is very personal for me

I had a mental breakdown because I thought I knew better than anybody else and I wouldn't go to other people for wisdom and I still see that tendency for independence in my life and this is the challenging part that to be part of a community who loves Jesus is not to just live our lives independently and then come to church on a Sunday and think we just praise God and then we go away and make all the decisions by ourselves but at the significant forks in your road in your life Proverbs is telling you if you want to be wise you will bring the counsel of other people godly people not just anybody not just anybody but godly people into your life you know it's things like do we have the humility and the teachability to say things like hey I'm fighting with my spouse every day and I don't know how to deal with this could you help me could you walk with me through this are we humble enough to be open enough with somebody in this church to do that it's the things of saying

I'm struggling with same sex attraction I'm struggling with thoughts about somebody else who is not my spouse and I don't know how to handle it will you walk with me in this guide me because so many of us are actually fools like so often I am because we think we know best that's why we don't ask other people godly people for wisdom in our world and in our crossroads of life and you've got a thousand other people who are speaking to you at the crossroads of your life and the choices that you have right even now and the point is where are you going for wisdom do you go to God's word do you go to other godly people or are you just trying to figure out your own way by yourself and he's saying you're a fool if you do that you'll be a fool you realize that's one of the reasons why in the church we don't just want to segregate married people over here single people over here because if single people get together and they're just together do you know what and they're talking about relationships relationships it's pulling ignorance together right how much better is it if you have somebody who's been through that and has walked with

God and you can draw on their wisdom to bring help along those crossroads so you don't keep turning left when you should be turning right it's the same with those of you who are older are you involved in the lives of other people so that there can be an impartation of what God has imparted into you and to somebody else and be careful it's not that you are now the old sage wise one who just dumps advice on people because humble wise people are teachable and know the limits of their wisdom but you walk alongside other people together that's how a community becomes wise and our society is so filled with individualism and independence that we've forgotten the collective wisdom of people who've walked with God together here in this community so wisdom it's the skill of living well in the complexity of life we need the fear of God treasuring him above everything else through his word in community very final thing it's the call of wisdom the call of wisdom

I don't know if you noticed in verse well in the beginning of verse 8 chapter 8 and the beginning of chapter 9 who is wisdom talking to do you notice he's calling out to the simple and to fools did you see that he's calling out simple and the fools the simple are people who are easily persuaded and just easily choose the wrong direction fools are those who have already taken the wrong term and just believe in their own lives but it says whoever 9 verse 4 says whoever is simple let him turn in here verse 6 says leave your simple ways and live right now in your world I don't know what's going on in your world but right now in your world wisdom is calling out to you and isn't that grace think about it you could have been

[ 38 : 06 ] I don't know what you've been doing in your life but I know me and I know probably you are all like me that you've been turning left a lot of the time in your life you know we turn left to head towards foolish town we're at the crossroads the GPS of wisdom is telling us to go right but we've gone left that voice in your conscience has said hold your tongue that voice in your conscience has been saying don't dwell on that thought about that woman or that guy that voice has been telling you spend time in God's word pick up your phone to your dad even though he hurt you that voice has been telling you that it's been telling you to go right and you've been going left deliberately deliberately and it may be you've been turning left for a long time maybe you're you're kind of you've gone to foolish town and you're now like you've got a nice bed and breakfast there and you've settled down you've been there for a long time making foolish choices but the amazing thing of grace is that wisdom is still calling out to you today and saying it's not too late though you have turned left today is a day where you can now turn right and listen to me the call of wisdom goes out to you today and says come come eat of my bread drink of my wine

I've got a banquet for you I've got a feast for you I've got my love for you I've got my grace for you today you can eat of the satisfaction of saying no to your porn habit to say yes to the freedom from shame today the word turn it says it's what Jesus says it's the word repent it's the same word and when the New Testament says the idea of wisdom do you know what it says it's not talking just an idea in the mind it's not talking a concept it's not just nice advice when the New Testament says wisdom it says it's talking about a person it's talking about Jesus Christ 1 Corinthians says God chose the foolish in the world like you and me to shame the wise because of him you are in Christ Jesus who became for us wisdom from God that means

Jesus himself is calling out to you with all the choices that you have and he's saying run to me turn to me come to me right now with whatever is going on in your life and you will find a feast prepared for you experience my love so you're not craving for it from everyone else my forgiveness so you're free from the guilt and shame which stops you from learning how to discipline and bring out your kids so well with wisdom come to me because Psalm 130 says with the Lord there is forgiveness therefore we will fear you Jesus is calling you will you come to him for wisdom let's pray maybe as you just think about what's going on in your life at the moment actually on the screen we will have just a few questions for you to just reflect for a minute because I don't want us to run away from actually responding to what

Jesus is trying to say to you right now so have a look at these four questions because some of you here you have got issues in your life that you know are real and you've gone and talked to nobody about them and today Jesus is calling you to say who are you going to go to for godly wisdom some of you are wrestling with choices at the moment and you're wondering what do I do and it's felt like you've been waiting for a long time and Jesus is just saying come to me trust me treasure me and I will lead you on this path you will not miss out some of you have just never got enough into god's word enough to really understand wisdom and all and god is saying to you will you come into my word with my people and will you let me speak to you just like you to pray by yourself in reflection of those questions just respond to Jesus yourself right now if you're a

Christian if you're not a Christian where do you get your wisdom from father you sent your son to a world full of foolish people like me like all of us and it's your grace that you keep chasing after us you chased us to the cross that you draw us back that we'd come into this relationship with you so that we'd see how the world works we'd see clearly beyond the foolishness of the things that we believe in please I pray for us pray for us that you'd help us to see the beauty of your forgiveness of your grace of your honor of the glory that you have brought us to know you and in knowing you we can walk with you and know that we're not going to screw up our lives because when we walk with you you make a way for us

[ 44 : 38 ] I pray for those of us who know that actually we've screwed up in many ways in our lives I pray that they'd hear you speaking this morning that word of just come and that we turn and find that banquet of forgiveness and grace waiting for us that you purchased on that cross for us I pray make us a wise people who are not so independent that we don't just try and figure out life by ourselves Lord creating us that humility that teachability that sense of knowing how much we need you and we need each other and grow us in wisdom to love you to do our relationships well that we'll honor you in Jesus name Amen