

# Who Is Wise?

by Alistair Begg

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*True wisdom is not about professional competence, but about living a life that reflects God's character and applying knowledge to fulfill His purposes.*

**Duration:** 41:19

**Scripture:** Proverbs 2:6, James 1:5, James 3:13-15, James 3:17-18

**Topics:** "Wisdom"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of wisdom and discernment. He urges his listeners to make straight paths for their feet and not to stray from the right path. The preacher warns against the dangers of adultery and encourages his audience to be wise and avoid temptation. He also discusses the impact of ideas and advertising, highlighting the need for sound principles and fortification in a world of temptation.

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## Transcript

The following message by Alistair Begg is made available by Truth For Life. For more information, visit us online at [truthforlife.org](http://truthforlife.org). We continue our studies in James as we turn to James, page 855 in the Church Bibles, James chapter 3 and verse 13. James 3, 13, Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by good deeds, done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from heaven, but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure, then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. Now, Father, with our Bibles open before us, please come and help us so that we might speak and listen in a way that is honoring to you and life-transforming for us.

For Jesus' sake. Amen. Those of you who have been studying along with us in James know that this third chapter has begun with James addressing the would-be teachers.

Let not many of you, he says, presume to be teachers, because there are implications. It's a dangerous task to be involved with. And not least of all, because it means using your tongue, and our tongues are

often the vehicle for disappointment and deceit and disgrace.

And then from verse 3 through verse 12, he has a discourse that is all about the tongue. And it may well be that this discourse is in some sense a digression, a meaningful digression. He's on the tongue and he just reinforces it, but that he hasn't, in verse 13, changed his focus in terms of those he is addressing at the beginning of the chapter.

In other words, he still has in mind the would-be teachers. Those who, by dint of their background or interest or involvement, are suggesting that they are the individuals who have the requisite gifts and calling to become teachers in the church. And so to them, and to others, obviously, but to them perhaps in particular, he issues this particular challenge.

Who is wise and understanding among you? We're getting a group of wise and understanding individuals together, and we would like all of you to assemble over here by the tree, if you would. And as people begin to scurry for their diplomas and for their briefcases and for their files, full of information and for their heads full of knowledge, in order to come over and display themselves to be amongst the wise and the understanding, James says, hey, hang on just a minute. You'll be able to tell whether you should be over by the tree, not by your degrees, but by your lifestyle.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. In other words, the issue here, says James, is not one of professional competence, but it is that of practical godliness. And the challenge that he is laying down is akin to what has already happened in chapter 2 as it relates to faith.

Remember, here comes somebody who says, I am a man of faith, or I am a woman of faith. And James says, okay then, show me your faith. Show me your faith.

And now in chapter 3, here I am, I am someone of wisdom and understanding. He says, well then, let's just apply the same test. Why don't you show me how wise and understanding you are? Why? Because true wisdom, like true faith, is vital, it is practical, and it is observable.

Because the wisdom that James is addressing here is the endowment of heart and mind from God, giving us all that is necessary for right conduct as a result of right thinking. That's what you have in Romans 12. Be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

How will we know that our minds are renewed? How will we know the nature of our creed in our conduct? How will we know the nature of our faith in our function? How will we know the nature of our wisdom in our practical living out of such a life? Now, this is very Old Testament in its orientation, and we've said already that James is a very proverbial New Testament book. There are many echoes of proverbs in this book. And so it is not surprising that the Old Testament concept of wisdom is uppermost in the mind of James.

Wisdom is to be seen in the living of life. We are completely on the wrong track if we're thinking simply in terms of SAT scores, of intellect, or of grey matter, of capacity, mental capacity. That's not what James is addressing here.

It's not really what the Bible addresses at all when it comes to the subject of wisdom. Wisdom has feet, wisdom has action, wisdom goes places. So, for example, in Psalm 1, the book of Psalms opens up with a description of a wise man.

How do we know that he is wise? Because he does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly. He does not stand in the way of sinners. He does not sit in the seat of mockers.

So people look at him and see him go, see him sit, watch where he stands, and then conclude he is a wise man. His wisdom is deduced from his life as lived, not from his lips as proclaimed. There is a huge distinction between education and wisdom.

Our culture is preoccupied with education. Justifiably so, we don't want dumb children. Parents are concerned, schools are concerned, politicians are concerned.

But as I'll show you later on, many of those concerns are completely divorced from that which James is addressing here. Now, the wisdom that he's referencing is the wisdom that gives insight into the will of God, his purposes, and gives the ability to fulfill his purposes. And what I'd like to do is to isolate one wisdom from the other.

You will notice if you have an NIV that it describes, it says here that there are two kinds of wisdom. One is heavenly, one is earthly, one is proud, one is humble, one is from heaven, one is from hell, and so on. We're only going to deal with it in terms of heavenly wisdom or true wisdom to begin with.

And we won't deal with all of it even this morning in this first instance. But to give you some idea of what we're trying to do, we will first of all look at the source of this true wisdom. And then in verse 17, at the nature of this wisdom.

And then coming back to verse 13 again, at the evidence of this wisdom. But we won't get beyond source, so you needn't really worry very much about it at all. James has already introduced the subject and has answered his own question.

And in the fifth verse of chapter one, if you remember, he said, If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives to all generously. In other words, James knew his Bible. He knew that this was exactly what Solomon had written in his Proverbs.

And particularly in Proverbs chapter two, where he says, For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. The Bible is unequivocal concerning this. If you want to be a wise person, you need to know God.

If you want to be a wise person, you need a Bible. If you want to be those who display understanding, then it starts with your own humility before the majesty and might of the God who has made you. And if you don't start there, then everything else will be deducted in a way that is flawed.

So he says, the wisdom back in James 1 verse 17 is the wisdom that comes down from heaven. It comes down from heaven. And this is simply another way of saying that it comes from God.

The wisdom that comes from heaven. Remember that the Jews, and Orthodox Jews to this day, are concerned about the irreverent use of the name of God. And so they will, in every instance that they can, use a substitute for God.

So you have it, for example, in the parable of the prodigal son. When he comes to his senses, he says, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. What does it mean he sinned against heaven? It's simply a way of him avoiding the use of God's name.

I've sinned against God. God is in heaven. So when James says, this wisdom comes down from heaven, he's simply saying what he's referenced in verse 5 of chapter 1. This wisdom is from God.

And it is this wisdom which Solomon requested of God. Remember? How God comes to him and it's recorded for us in 1 Kings 3. It's a wonderful story. And God says, what would you like, Solomon? And Solomon says, well, I would like to be wise.

I'd like to be able to discriminate between error and truth. I'd like to be able to discern between right and wrong. I'd like to be a wise person.

And 1 Kings 3.10 records the fact that the Lord was pleased that Solomon asked him for this. Good man, Solomon. That was a good answer.

Where did you come up with that answer, Solomon? Well, the answer to that question, Solomon tells us in Proverbs chapter 4. Listen to what he says. When I was a boy in my father's house, still tender and an only child of my mother, he taught me and said, lay hold of my words with all your heart. Keep my commandments and you will live.

Get wisdom. Get understanding. Don't forget my words or swear from them.

So, from his very infancy, Solomon was nurtured in the awareness of what he later writes. That the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. That the entry into the school of understanding is an entryway that comes in an encounter with God who has made us.

And the God who has made us has revealed himself to us externally in creation and internally by means of our conscience. And so we have within us a sense of oughtness that speaks to the fact of his handiwork and his control. And we have above us and beyond us the vastness of the world that he has made which speaks to his power and to his majesty.

Now, I'll leave you to read some of Solomon on your own. Chapter 4 is particularly powerful as he calls out to his children to make sure that they don't neglect wisdom. Whatever else you do, he says, make sure that you are wise.

Make sure that you discern between right and wrong. Make sure you make straight paths for your feet. Don't go from the right and don't go to the left.

Is this just a sort of elaborate cry from an intelligent dad who is a pragmatist and knows the benefits of putting your best foot forward? No. No. Because he goes from chapter 4 into chapter 5. And what's chapter 5 about? Adultery.

He doesn't want his boy to go down there. He doesn't want his boy to stop off at that house. What does he need? He needs to be wise.

He doesn't need to be educated. If education was the answer to helping people to stop smoking, the information is so undeniable that there wouldn't be a person smoked in the entire world. Education is not capable to do it.

If education could deal with teenage pregnancy, it would be over with. It can't do it. It's wisdom that is lacking.

We're getting a group of wise and understanding people. They're going to stand over here by the tree, who are the wise and the understanding ones. You see, what Solomon does is provide, if you like, the example par excellence of Christian parenting.

Because what he does in his day and generation is what every Christian parent must at least attempt to do in their generation. And interestingly, when you move from generation to generation, and after you've lived a little while, you can speak about generations, and you can read history books, and then you know a little more about generations. But it is an observable fact to me that the older people grow, the more they pontificate about the nature of the predicament of the culture in which they're living.

So grandparents are, oh, this is the worst I've ever seen in my entire life. I don't think my grandchildren are going to be able to cope. I think the whole world is over, you know.

And there may be justifiable reasons for making those deductions, but you only need to read history to know you're just singing an old song. You know, this was up the charts many, many times before. You can go to any century and find people bemoaning the same thing.

What do you think Augustine's mother thought in the fourth century? What do you think she was saying with her boy, complete bedlam in his life, going all over the place? Listen to this. Sound familiar? Our young people are growing up at a period when the foundations of the earth are out of course, and when subtle and restless efforts are made to poison their hearts and pervert their ways. Nothing, therefore, can be more important than to fortify them with sound principles that when withdrawn from the parental wing into a world of temptation, they may be under a divine cover as the children of a special providence.

This is the introduction to a book on Proverbs. October 7th, 1846. So 160 years ago, the fellow's writing the introduction to Proverbs and he goes, this is terrible.

Our young people are just in dreadful predicaments. I can't believe the kind of things that are going on in the books that are out there. They haven't even reached the silent movies yet.

Can you imagine what if somebody was dropped down from 1846 just to watch MTV? Could they conceive of such a world? 1846, that decade is interesting. Because it's in that decade that Jonathan Edwards, whose name you may know, and some of his colleagues started to call for what he referred to as a great awakening. Started to ask God to come and visit North America with a dramatic display of his power and of his wisdom.

What most of us don't know is that what motivated this call from the heart of Edwards and his friends was the secular thinking being taught at Harvard and Yale. And they were so disappointed as graduates of Yale at how things had gone and what they had been taught that they asked God to come and speak wisdom again into our land. Now, if you think about this, it is quite fascinating because Harvard was founded in the 17th century.

Glasgow University in the 14th century. But anyway, we needed to produce the scholars to bring them over here so you could have a university. But anyway, sorry for that dreadful jingoistic burst, couldn't resist it.

But anyway, 1636, Harvard is founded. 1642, the student handbook is published in which every student at Harvard is called to be, quotes, plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well that the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life, and therefore to lay hold of

Christ as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning. That's 1642 Harvard student handbook.

So if you sent your son off to Harvard in the 17th century and he came home with a handbook and you were washing his laundry and you had a little look into the handbook, you would discover that your boy was in a good spot or your girl was in a good spot. There they're going to be compelled to consider the fact that the only found of genuine knowledge and understanding is there in a foundation which can be laid by no one other than Jesus Christ himself. Yale was founded in 1701.

And the reason for the founding of Yale was because congregational believers, that is, believers in the congregational church, were disappointed by the growing apostasy at Harvard. So that in the second half of the 17th century, despite the handbook in 1642, things had already begun to go south. So they established Yale.

And Edwards' mom and dad sent him to Yale for a good education, not like he would get at Harvard. And Edwards and his colleagues emerged from Yale and said, we better try another place. And they founded Princeton University as a reaction to Harvard and to Yale.

What is the point of declension at every point? It is the departure from wisdom and the embracing of earthly perspectives. Simplistic analysis? Undoubtedly. Faithfully true? Yes.

In other words, such cries are far removed from the contemporary president of Harvard, who said just recently, things divine have been central neither to my professional nor to my private life. Issues of divinity, he says, do not influence me in my professional capacity, nor do they play any part of significance in my private life. I admire his honesty.

At least it's true. But it is a long way removed, isn't it? Now let me pause purposefully with you here and just tease this out a little bit. Are you all right with this? Are you with me? All right? This is a little bit of a digression, but it is a purposeful digression.

It's not because I've run out of material. Let's just pause and acknowledge something that is patently obvious. Ideas have consequences.

Ideas have consequences. And people know that ideas have consequences, and that's why advertising is as profoundly impactful as it is. Because it is essentially the packaging of ideas, of concepts, of notions.

Some of them very subtle, some of them almost deceitful. It's amazing the way in which somebody sells their product to us by making us feel good about a funny little golden retriever that is running through the grass. But it's got nothing at all to do with the exorbitant fees that the bank is going to charge you for leaving your money in their establishment.

But somehow or another, the retriever did it, you know. We got caught up by the retriever. They sold us an idea.

They packaged it. David Myers wrote a book called *The American Paradox*. *Spiritual Hunger in an Age of Plenty* was the subtitle.

It was published, actually, by Yale University Press. And this paradox he described as follows. We're better fed, better paid, better housed, better educated, and healthier than ever before, and with more human rights, faster communication, and more convenient transportation than we have ever known.

Alongside all this large yes, however, are the signs of life in pain and travail. Since 1960, the divorce rate has doubled. Teen suicide has tripled.

Violent crime quadrupled. The number in prison has quintupled. Illegitimate children six times sextupled.

And the number of those cohabiting has increased sevenfold. Now, these are facts. Ideas have consequences.

The idea that there is a God to whom men and women are accountable has an impact, when believed, on the lives and lifestyles of those who believe. The idea that we are simply a random collection of molecules held in suspension with no particular significance at all, also has implications. Not least of all, in how we spend our time, our money, and with whom we spend our time and money.

And it may be with whomsoever we choose, and on whatsoever we desire, depending on the source of wisdom. I give kudos to Scotland. I take some of it back now in relationship to the Enlightenment.

Because Scottish philosophers can't wiggle out of that one. They had a large part to play in doing what? In taking the notion of revelation, that God has spoken in his world, and putting it over in a corner, and replacing revelation with rationality. So that instead of our route to God being a route which comes as a result of his revelation and his initiative, any lingering route to God would be a route that would come through our own intellect.

Therefore, having set aside the notion of revelation, and having embraced rationalism, we then follow that track down, and it leads us to nowhere in the end. And no surprise, because God has made foolish the wisdom of this world. So that man by his wisdom cannot know God.

That there is ultimately no intellectual road to God. As good as apologetics are, they cannot argue to God. If you're an atheist, it won't be apologetics that brings you to Jesus.

It will be the fact that God reveals himself to you. And maybe in the strangest person. Maybe in somebody that you think is a nut.

Maybe in somebody that couldn't even stand with you in intellectual discourse. And maybe it is in a child. Maybe it is in looking into the eyes of someone and seeing the compassion of Christ there.

It will be by means of revelation. But the Enlightenment shifts revelation, replaces it with rationalism. The ensuing years follow.

You fast forward up to the 21st century, and where are we now? You don't have many scientific rationalists really left at all. There used to be a lot of them all over the place. Case Western Reserve, there are some.

The Cleveland Clinic, University Hospital, a few of the bright people. The derivatives of Alan Bradley and all of those kind of people. But not many.

It's fascinating. Talk with them. They may have crystals hanging from their mirrors.

They may be asking you about angels. They may be wanting to talk to you about the healing power of prayer. Although they don't believe that prayer means anything or goes anywhere or does anything.

But if it can possibly make them feel good, then they'll be happy to think about it. But of course, if you have a view on it, don't hold it in any sense vociferously. Because they will know immediately that you must be wrong.

Because rationalism argued for the goalposts being in place and the lines being drawn and the referee with a whistle. By the 21st century, there are no goalposts. There are no lines.

There is no referee. There is no need for a whistle. Because there is no, in the minds of contemporary philosophy, there is no objective basis whereby we can deduce right from wrong.

And jurisprudence is full of it. How can you have the Menendez brothers' trial to which they confessed and in a hung jury? First time around. And we can go through a whole host of these things.

What's the problem? The problem is that the jurors who sit aren't wise. Or they might be intelligent. But they're not wise.

Because they don't have the wisdom that comes from heaven. The wisdom that comes from heaven, which is moral before it's intellectual. Which is ethical and practical before it is simply intellectually absorbable.

Hence the teaching in our schools. Much of it is very effective, but it is not wise. The decisions that are made in the schools are not wise decisions.

Why? Because in order to make a wise decision, you have to become a wise man or a wise woman. How do you become a wise woman or a wise man? By bowing down before God and acknowledging that He is the Creator. That we are accountable to Him as Creator.

That we depend upon Him for our life and our breath and our existence and our minds and everything else besides. And contemporary man is unprepared for such an admission. I'm not going to bow down before someone I can't see.

So what are we? Well, we're just a culture in crisis. And the reason we're a culture in crisis or western civilizations in crisis is because we're individuals in crisis. Because the average person can't answer the question, who are you? Who are you? Oh, we maybe joke about, what's her name, Tricky Woo, Paris Hilton or whatever.

And the coming in and going out and what she's doing or Brittany or who knows. Any of them. I see them when I ever stop and I try and help my wife about once a month and go to the grocery store.

And there, when you're getting cartons of milk, you just get a whole civilization there. You only have to be there about a minute and a half, you get the whole deal. Who's leaving who, who's getting back together, who's married, who's divorced, whatever else it is.

And you can look at it and you can disdain it or you can just burst into tears when you think about it. Because they don't have an answer to the who question. Who am I? You see, if a person can't ask the who question, who am I, and answer it properly.

And say, well, I am a moral being made in the image of a God to whom I am accountable and before whom one day I will stand. Then they're going to have to come up with something else. Who am I? I am my genes.

The great search, you know, the great genetic search. We understand it from a medical perspective. But what's the big deal? Are you really that fascinated by your chromosomes? Who are you? I'm my genes.

I am my sexual orientation. I am my past. I am my self-image.

I am my personality. I am my experiences. I am what I possess.

I am what I eat. I am what I don't eat. I am what I do.

I am what I know. I don't know what I am. Okay, now you're being honest.

Ideas of consequences. Children cannot be taught at school that they were born without reason, that they prolong themselves by chance and they die and they go into oblivion. Without it will make an impact on their lives and on their tiny minds.

There's all the difference in the world between putting your head on the pillow at night as a teenage boy trying to make sense of your existence, knowing that God is in heaven and he will care for you if you call out to him, and being told that there is no possible explanation for your existence. So whether you awake or whether you die, whether you live or whether you're significant is entirely irrelevant. Ideas of consequences.

Now let's have the wise and the understanding stand over by the tree. He says, James, let me give you one long quote and then a short quote and then we're done. This is from Walter Lippmann in a book called A Preface to Morals, in which he describes the experience of what he refers to as man in the 21st century.

Listen carefully to this. Moments of blank misgiving in which he finds that the civilization of which he is a part leaves a dusty taste in his mouth. He may be very busy with many things, but he discovers one day that he's no longer sure that they are worth doing.

He has been much preoccupied, but he's no longer sure he knows why. He has become involved in an elaborate routine of pleasures, and they do not seem to amuse him very much. He finds it hard to believe that doing any one thing is better than any other thing, or in fact is better than doing nothing at all.

It occurs to him that it is a great deal of trouble to live, and that even in the best of lives, the thrills are few and far between. He begins more or less to seek satisfaction because he is no longer satisfied, and all the while he realizes that the pursuit of happiness was always a most unhappy quest. You say, well, okay, fine.

No, no, no, no, not so fast. Are you going to sign a living will and have a physician who fits that description make a decision about the end of your life? Clever enough to become a doctor, but not a wise man. Clever enough to put the machinery in place and to understand the chemistry, but not a wise woman.

Someone who when she awakened in the morning and got in her car and drove it to the garage said, I don't know whether it is significant for me to be a doctor or not. I don't know whether it is significant for me to live or not. I don't know whether I have any reason for existence whatsoever, but let me go in now and make sure I take care of the rest of the universe when they're all presented to me in my surgery.

Ideas and consequences. And the old pictures of the doctor with a stethoscope hanging around his neck and the black bag and everything else are all regarded as a charming past. You know, haha, that's the old days of whoever that painter was that everybody had or has that you get in garage sales with the doctor

and the dentist and everybody else.

What's he called? Who? Yeah, that's in Rockwell. Plates. He has plates.

I remember that. But there is a nostalgia in that because you can't imagine a Norman Rockwell plate, can you? For euthanasia. The Norman Rockwell plate with the tube being removed from your grandmother's wrist.

Ideas and consequences, loved ones. Don't miss this. And don't think for a moment that this is what happens when you read books and sit in the library all day.

This is down at the popular level. This is down at the grassroots. 1953, Samuel Beckett's play, *Waiting for Godot*, or *Godot*, as it's said here.

I don't know where the emphasis should be in the syllable, but you know the play. It opened in Paris in 1953. I missed the opening.

I was only one. And it's amazing to me that that play is still out there. Have you ever seen it? Have you ever read it? There's no plot.

There's actually no play. No movement. Nothing happens.

No one goes anywhere. No conclusions are reached. No issues are resolved.

And then the curtain closes. Everybody goes, man, that was fantastic. What did you make of that? I just wasted 27 bucks.

That's what I made of that. That's unbelievable. I can do that to myself.

I can pull my shower curtain over and sit in front of it. How can we do stuff like that? Because we're not wise. It's an expression of foolishness.

It's an expression of nihilism. It is an expression of emptiness. It is an expression of lostness.

It is the wisdom that is earthly and sensual and irredeemable. And just in case you say, well, you know, so what? I don't know who Beckett was, and I frankly don't care. You don't need to go there.

You just need to turn your TV on. Watch the reruns. Watch the reruns.

Because *Waiting for Godot* has reincarnated itself a number of times, and best of all, in a show about nothing. Oh, there couldn't be a show about nothing, was there? Who would write a show about nothing? *Seinfeld*? Everybody said, hey, it's going to be terrific. Wednesday night, there's a show about nothing.

Can you believe that? No, I can't. Well, you wait and see. It'll be terrific.

Thomas Hibbs says, A show about the comical consequences of a life and a world void of ultimate significance or fundamental meaning. The comical consequences of life and a world void of ultimate significance or fundamental meaning. That's what it's all about.

And that's why, you see, in that show, it always goes back to the bass guitar, doesn't it? Now we're off, and George is having a cup of tea with somebody. And now Elaine is over here, trying to get Kramer out of

wherever else it is. You say, well, how do we get from here to there? Doesn't matter.

It doesn't matter. There is no from here to there. They're all disjointed random events in a random world full of random people going nowhere at all.

It's fool's wisdom. And the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Socrates, my final quote.

All of the wisdom of this world is but a tiny raft upon which we must set sail when we leave this earth. If only there was a firmer foundation upon which to sail, perhaps some divine word, tiny raft, hanging all of our hopes on a fool's wisdom. If only there was some foundation.

If only there was a lifeboat coming from somewhere. And there is. The foolishness of the cross is the wisdom of God.

And the wisdom of God is powerful in its impact. We used to sing about it when we were small. We made it easy living on the Clyde in Glasgow because these huge ocean-going liners came up, Navy liners and commercial liners.

But they couldn't navigate the Clyde until the pilot went out from down by Guruk or Greenuk. And as a boy, I would always watch as the tiny tugboat went out, as the huge liner got so far and stopped, and then the fellow would climb up the steps and he would get on, and then the thing would reconvene and then it would be taken safely into the harbour. The guy got it so far but couldn't get it to his destination and then the pilot came.

And at Sunday school we taught a little song, Do you want a pilot? Signal then to Jesus. Do you want a pilot? Then bid him come on board and he will safely guide across the ocean wide until at last you reach the heavenly harbour. There is only one person in the whole world that can make it possible for any one of us to safely reach the harbour of heaven and that is Jesus Christ himself.

A notion which is regarded as abject total foolishness but which is, says scripture, the very wisdom. I commend you to Jesus as your only saviour and as our only hope in life and in death. Let us pray together.

O God, our Father, part us now with your blessing. May those of us who are wrestlers on the sea of life cry out to you as a pilot to come and take control of our zigzagging lives, of our threatening upheavals, to meet with us in our storms and in our frantic attempts to get who knows where. Forgive us for thinking we can do it on our own, figure it out.

We put our hands over our mouths and we say, O God, come and take control today. Fill me with the Lord Jesus Christ in all of his wisdom and his righteousness and his truth. And may grace and mercy and peace from the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be the abiding portion of all who believe today and forevermore.

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