

Wisdom's Cry

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman's sermon 'Wisdom's Cry' emphasizes the importance of applying God's wisdom in our lives, especially in challenging times.

Duration: 44:42

Topics: "Spiritual Wisdom", "Fear Of God"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking wisdom in challenging times, drawing parallels from Proverbs and Jesus's teachings. It highlights the need to listen to God's word, be wise in decision-making, and be prepared for spiritual warfare. The fear of the Lord is presented as the foundation of wisdom, leading to obedience and life-changing insights when sought diligently.

Transcript

If you have your Bibles, turn to Matthew 10. It's where we left off, Matthew 10. The title of the message is Wisdom's Cry.

Wisdom's Cry, Wisdom's Cry. And I think it's important for all of us to realize that in these dire times that we're in, right, with the nation, everything that's going on, wisdom still cries out. Wisdom still cries out, God's word cries out to us.

And it says, listen, my people, if you would listen and you would heed, I can direct you, I can guide you. And that's kind of where I wanna parallel this with Jesus's words in Matthew 10, verse 16. I'm gonna read it all the way through, even though I'm not gonna get through all of it tonight.

I'm gonna get through the first sentence there. Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Well, that's comforting, isn't it? We, actually, that's how we live.

We live in a culture, we live in a world as sheep in the midst of wolves. So how do you act? Well, he didn't end it there. He went on to say, therefore, be wise as serpents, but harmless as doves.

But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for my sake as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about what or how you should speak, for it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak.

For it is not you who speak, but the spirit of your father who speaks in you. Now, brother will deliver up brother to death and father his child. Very sad, isn't it? Are we not seeing that today in some of the countries? And children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. Oh, Lord, help us with this.

We need you in these times. And I was also reminded of John 16 too, that when Jesus said that there will come a time when people will kill you and think that they are doing God a favor. That's what we're seeing on the news.

They're killing people thinking they'll do God a favor. And that's why we've talked about it so many times. I won't belabor this point, but that's why the name of Jesus is so offensive.

It's that light shining in darkness and there's no other way in their mind to get rid of it, but to annihilate it. And of course we can't, you can't quench God's word. You can't quench the message of the gospel.

It just rises and rises and rises. And that's what we're seeing in our culture. But I wanna talk about this topic or this sentence that Jesus said, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

I mean, it seems like an oxymoron, doesn't it? I mean, one or the other, either you're a serpent or you're a gentle dove flying away, not harming anybody. But we're supposed to have both of those qualities. And I think sometimes we get on one side or the other, don't we? We're all serpent and there's no gentleness, there's no dove-like, or we're all dove.

And it says, oh, it's whatever. And we're so gullible and we just get led into all these kinds of things. And Jesus wants us to be both.

So I wanna try to tackle that tonight. But wisdom's cry, what I mean by wisdom's cry, and it parallels with this verse, is wisdom cries out, Proverbs 1.20, in the open square, out in the open, wisdom calls aloud, she raises her voice in the public square. And really, the public square back then was where they delivered the news, where everything got out to the people.

And the same cry goes out today, wisdom cries out, wisdom calls out loudly. Every Saturday, it calls out from here, does it not? It cries out, and what is the point of a cry? To hear. I hear you, wisdom, I hear you, it cries out.

It's not a little passive voice in the night. It's a cry, listen, turn to God's Word, turn to the truth, turn to wisdom, and I will guide you, I will lead you, I will instruct you. That's wisdom's cry.

And the interesting thing about wisdom, it is the ability to look down the road and make choices now that will prevent disaster later. That's what wisdom is. And a lot of times, why we don't make wise decisions, many times we don't see immediate results.

I made a decision, but I don't see the immediate results. And the devil likes to just keep us in this waiting time. So what happens in the waiting time? I'm tired of waiting.

But wisdom cries out, it says listen, look down the road, look down the road, and these choices, see, our choices have consequences. What's not happening right now? Oh, Lord, it's coming, trust me. I mean, often, you know, obviously in counseling, we talk to people before they get married, and they're trying to

abstain and do everything right.

But some people are just like, well, I don't care. I mean, lookit, we're getting along, we love each other. You know, that's not for us.

And then you get into the marriage six months, and there's all these mistrust issues, there's all these arguing, there's all this, the consequences of choices that were made early on. Not only are the choices wrong, but it clouds your vision to determine God's will. Because many people are saying, is this God's will? Is this God's will? Well, start acting right, and then his will becomes even clearer.

So wisdom cries out in these areas, it looks down the road. So next time you're gonna make a choice, look down the road a little bit. What is this choice gonna look like? In the church, in personal life, in our marriage? What is this gonna look like if we make the choice to get the last word in? What's that gonna look like in a few minutes? Wisdom looks down the road.

Now, of course, I've never mastered any of these things I'm talking about. I'm a work in progress just like you are. Pastors need to be pastors.

Pastors need to be ministered to as well. So this is an area that we all struggle with, wisdom, financially, relationally, emotionally, all these areas. And I believe Jesus has some good advice, which he always does.

And wisdom isn't just good advice. Wisdom is not just good advice. And here's where I think a lot of people missed it, and this really went off, light went off my head this week.

Oh, that's why. A lot of times, one of the most frustrating things with counseling people is you get a lot of this. Hmm, that sounds, yeah, I need it.

But no application. It's like, did you just want some good advice? Very few people actually follow the advice that they're given. Because a lot of times we look for people to tell us what we wanna hear.

Well, Shane sure didn't tell me what I wanted to hear. Let me go talk to Bob, my coworker. He'll, and then we, oh, that's what I wanted to hear.

Yeah, I'll follow Bob's advice. And that's the hard thing with counseling is it's not just good advice. Listen, wisdom is truth set in motion.

God says, I can't change the parameters. I can't, this is truth set in motion. I cannot change these parameters.

And we see this a lot, too, in talking with couples that maybe they're separated. And I've talked about this before, so it's no secret. A lot of times when they separate, guess what? They get boyfriends and girlfriends.

So my advice is always, there's no plan B when you're seeking restoration. Untie those things now. Now? Now.

Now? That's just, well, Shane, I appreciate your advice, but then what happens? Wisdom has been set in motion. Wisdom is truth set in motion. What I mean by that is you can't change the parameters of wisdom.

You can't go, okay, that applies to this group, but not to me. God says, here it is, I lay it out. Choose life or choose death.

Here it is, I lay it out. Choose the godly way or the ungodly way. Here it is, I lay it out.

Choose the narrow road or choose the broad road. Here it is, I lay it out. So it's not just good advice.

It's truth that should be obeyed in order to restructure and renew your life and get you back on course. But that's the wonderful thing about God is he always says, listen, it's still crying out. Wisdom's still crying out.

Yes, there's circumstances that you're in. Yes, you've made a mess of your life, but it still cries out. I will redirect you and get you back on track.

But we can't, and I've seen that. I've done that before, too. I've got wisdom from people.

Say, well, thank you for your advice. Advice? No, this is what you need to do. This is what you need.

This is what has to happen in this place. In the big epidemic, too, we've recently talked to guys, obviously, with pornography and women as well, and you've gotta have some serious things in place, accountability, and we've got some ideas if you need help in that area. But when you give counsel in that area, it's not just good advice.

This is a sin that will kill, still, and to destroy your life. It will. It's not just, oh, okay, this is not just advice.

It's wisdom. So what you have to do with wisdom is embrace it. When wisdom cries aloud in the street, when wisdom cries out, you embrace the wisdom by obeying it.

I mean, how many times are we gonna come to church and hear the same thing in and out, every week, every month, every year, as if it's good advice? Many people say, I know it's wise, but let me take this as far as I can. Right? I know, Shane, if I had a dollar for every time somebody said, I know it's not right. I know what the Scriptures say.

But, but what? It never ends. If I, I wish I, you know, but I can't give a lot of examples because some of those people come here. But if I could give examples of, I know it's not right, but.

So are we caught in this, I don't care mode? I mean, one example I gave, they don't go here, so I think it's okay, but it was a pastor friend of mine, actually, and he was asked to step down from his certain denomination because marital problems. They said, hey, work on your marriage for a few months and then come back and let's get this, and instead of working on his marriage, he said, no, I'll just step down. And then he goes and plants another church while he's separated.

So I get involved in another friend of mine, and we just go and talk lovingly. And we say, listen, this is not a good, there's, what are you doing? And he said, I know it goes against godly counsel, Shane, and I know what the Scriptures say, but I think God is leading me to do this. And I leave there going, how does somebody get, how does that happen? I mean, did you just hear what you said? So basically, I brought it back to, well, then the Scriptures aren't true, correct? Because God's not gonna contradict his written will.

And guess who I just ran into yesterday? Guess who's miserable? Guess who started crying in the parking lot? Not me. I do sometimes. But this person, why? Because what he should've listened to three months ago, now he's coming to take, well, you know, what I'm trying to say.

What you sow is what you're gonna reap, and that's what he's reaping now. So just be very careful, because we can trick ourselves. I know I shouldn't do that, but.

And it's usually the but is there, so we can enjoy this besetting sin, or something, or this person, or this thing we just can't get rid of. I know, but. So be very careful there, because wisdom cries out, and it will not move.

Wisdom will not bend. You can't negotiate wisdom. It won't pull over to the side while you drive by.

Wisdom stands there, and it will not move. It cannot move, because God set it in motion. So our response is either to obey it or to reject it.

That's how important this is. Impulse is the enemy of wisdom. I read this this week in the Life Application Study Bible, and I had to share it with you, because it's so true.

Impulse is the enemy of wisdom. You know what impulse is, right? You see all those car commercials on TV? Oh, man, or Carl's Jr., and you're really hungry, and impulse, impulse. Clicking something on the internet, impulse, impulse, impulse.

It's the flesh that says, feed me, do it now. That's what impulse is. Feed me, do it now.

Nike had it wrong, but right for their marketing. If it feels good, just do it. Talk about invitation for disaster.

The Bible says, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Back up a little bit. So impulse is actually the enemy of wisdom, and here's what the Bible said, Life Application Study Bible.

We often act on impulse, satisfying immediate desires without pausing to consider the long-range consequences. When we see something we want, our first impulse is to get it. This is how the enemy works.

It goes on to say, we feel such great pressure that nothing else seems to matter, and we lose our perspective. Getting through that short, pressure-filled moment is often the most difficult part of overcoming temptation. Boy, if I could have just came and said that right there, that would help a lot of us out this week, wouldn't it? If you can just get through that, that pressure-filled moment of temptation, because he opens a way of escape.

No temptation has overtaken you, but what is common to man? But God will provide the way of escape that he may be able to bear it, that we may be able to bear it. So temptation says, oh, that looks tempting. I'm having a very pressure-filled moment.

I'm feeling overcome by this temptation. If we can get through that and get focused back on God, eventually that will leave, that will wane. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

That's one aspect of overcoming temptation. The hard part is too many people wanna fight it instead of flee it, right? I'll fight this one again. No, you won't, you'll lose again, and again, and again.

Sometimes you have to flee these things. Many of you have followed David Wilkerson before. I took an excerpt from an article that would really tie in well here, and it fits good.

He said, when I was a young preacher, and I can relate to this. I used to do this many years ago. I didn't give much thought to spiritual warfare.

I thought anybody who walked in victory shouldn't have any problems at all against the devil. To me, it was simply a matter of just resisting him. But soon, I found a roaring lion pouncing on my weaknesses with all his might, and I felt helpless to do battle with him.

All too often, I see the devil doing the same thing to other sincere Christians. I know multitudes of people, pure in heart, but overwhelmed by demonic floods of confusion and despair. Such Christians can labor diligently for the Lord for years, then one day, Satan suddenly injects accusing thoughts into their minds.

Overnight, they're overcome with awful troubles, unexpected temptations, covetousness, and depression. Their trials are so deep, strange, and mysterious that these saints have no idea where they have come from. Have you ever felt that? You go, where did that come from? I dealt with that years ago.

I don't want that resurfacing. Get that out of my life. Lord, get that out of my life.

I don't want it. You can rest assured it's an assault of the enemy to come in and plant things into your mind that should not be there, that have been dealt with years ago. And he goes on to say, I believe there is only one explanation.

Their troubles are a demonic onslaught. Time after time, I've seen this happen to Christians who are growing by leaps and bounds. At the very peak of their spiritual growth, Satan puts on an old seduction in their path.

See, it's not gonna be some new thing. Oh, I'm gonna go hit the crack pipe. I've never tried that before.

Let me see how that feels. No, it's gonna be the old seductress. Remember back when I got you there, and there, and there, and there.

I'm coming again. I'm coming again. There's no new tricks.

He's coming again. He does that. And it's usually at peaks, right, where they're growing in leaps and bounds.

God's Word's becoming active or we have a powerful worship service. Sometimes we'll have such a powerful worship service, you know, I'll be getting on my way home, and then like, ah, this accusation thoughts. Oh, you didn't preach as well.

You should have just said this. You should shut your mouth next time. And like, where did that come from? I'm not even thinking that way.

And the devil comes and tries to discourage and tries to stop or brings back old addictions, old things that you dealt with years ago. Where is that coming from? And actually, you start to feel guilty. You start to feel bad.

I must not be as good a Christian as I thought. I thought I had victory in this area. Well, that's what temptation is.

Remember, Jesus left. Always remember this. The devil left Jesus after he tried to tempt him, right? And the Bible says something very interesting.

And he left him until an opportune time might present itself again. So he didn't just, okay, I'm done with Jesus forever. Or with you, I'm done, okay, you overcame that.

Walk into an AA meeting sometime and ask some people if it's a struggle. Or they've been off of marijuana for two years. Sometimes God releases, but sometimes, that urge comes back and you go, where in the world? People overcome pornography.

Go in a year or two, great, they get so excited about it and proud and the devil loves a proud heart and there it comes again, bam. Where did that come from? That's why overcoming temptation is so important. Satan puts out an old seduction in our path and maybe an old lust, something they thought they'd overcome years before, but now, after years of living in victory, they're walking a very tightrope, teetering on the brink of indulgence that could lead them back into terrible bondage.

And we see this a lot of times with drug addicts, right? You get them out, they're doing good for months, maybe years, and they fall back into a lifestyle that now they're on a highway to hell. What happened? Well, this is where I want to bring wisdom is. Wisdom is applying God's truth even when you don't feel like it, comma, especially when you don't feel like it.

So remember that about wisdom. Often, you're not gonna feel like it, but that's when you need to apply it the most is when you don't feel like it. I know I need to make this decision.

I sure don't feel like making this decision. Well, you better make it. That's wisdom.

So not only is wisdom, is a truth set in motion, not only does wisdom look down the road and how these choices might affect me later, wisdom has to be made at difficult seasons in our life and at difficult times. Wisdom is applying God's truth even when we don't feel like it, and especially when we don't feel like it. So now that we have that as a backdrop, what did Jesus mean, be wise as serpents, as snakes? Well, this could take a whole hour right here if I had time, and I'm packing all this, but in a nutshell, snakes, what do we know about snakes? They're cunning, right? They move slow and methodical.

Remember I saw that rattlesnake with my dog out in the desert a few months ago? He wasn't just out there being stupid. He was back behind a bush. He got there somehow, I could see his trail.

Slow and methodical, cunning. That's how we should be as Christians. I believe it.

Slow down, methodical, think about it. Crafty, not in a bad way, but thinking things through, being cunning, being wise. Who told us to check our brains at the door and be gullible? Who told us, turn on the guy on television, send me \$1,000, you'll read 10 times that.

Okay, where's my checkbook? Who told us that? Where does that come from? So Jesus said, be wise as snakes, be wise as serpents. Look at how they move and how they strategically plan and they think and they're not going in a hurry and they're very smart in this area. But then what about sheep? So if I'm supposed to be as smart as a serpent and gentle as a sheep, well, of course we know sheep don't do much, right? They just lay around and eat.

They don't harm, they don't attack. So you get this gracious, loving feeling out of what Christ is trying to say. Be wise but not gullible, be methodical but not malicious.

So most commentaries would say this and I agree, obviously I'm not gonna go against commentaries depending on who they are, of course. But the serpent is the attitude, it's the cunning. I think of a businessman, you know, Fortune 500 company or CEO, they've made it there for a reason.

They're smart, they're using, they're methodical. But I've gotta be loving and gracious and understanding and calm and measure my words and be gentle. So you mix those together.

But often, like most things, we get one extreme or the other, right? We get the serpent who they're all, I'm just looking for something wrong. I'm gonna pounce on anybody that gets in my way. Like, oh, I don't even wanna go around that person.

Or the other person, right? Just gentle and stuff, whatever. Here's my money, here's my car, do whatever. I lost my house again? Oh man, you know, I thought this would work out.

They told me it was a good loan scheme and it's just constantly, I remember a poor lady, wow, 20 years ago now, I told her two or three times that this guy wanted her to invest in a medical facility. Her husband just died, she had some money. I think he won like 50,000 down in Santa Clarita.

I said, okay, this is not making quite sense here. Give him 50,000 and he'll just send you checks later? Well, yeah, but I'll be able to go down and see the facility. Within six months, she's out the money, she's locked out of the facility.

But it just felt right. I just thought, you know, I don't wanna question things. Really? God has given us wisdom and here's what it looks like.

We're not called, we should be the wisest. We have the truth of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit, but often we're the most gullible. When we should be the wisest, we should be able to speak the most truth into people's lives.

Here's when it's wrong. It's good to question, we shouldn't check our brains at the door. It's good to question, it's good to be the wisest serpent.

It's almost good to approach things sometimes like, okay. What Reagan used to say, trust but verify. Remember old President Ronald Reagan with the Russians? You don't know that, some of you guys are too young.

But he'd say, we trust you, but we're gonna verify. So it's good to have a listen. We trust, we're like, we're wise.

It doesn't seem we're gonna question. But when the questioning begins to come from a critical heart, that's where you have problems. Be gentle as a dove.

So if I go around questioning all the time, I'm not gentle as a dove, I've got a critical spirit. So we should question, but it must come from a heart that wants to protect, a heart that wants to help, a heart that wants to understand, not from a critical heart. Because you know the people, right? All they do is question.

Like you should call them the questioner. Just question, why do this, why this, why, oh my Lord, why are you questioning everything? Because there's a critical spirit can rise up in us. And we can question everything.

So here's a little practical application. Because always remember this, an open door may not be God's door. A good thing may not always be a God thing.

And I think this might be a good time to remind some of you back when I was, you know, I was doing real estate before the church. And I would see a lot of people would barely qualify for a certain amount, and they would just stretch that amount, and they would just, I mean, if we just cut every corner we can afford this, and then they'd say, you know, they'd say, let's, Shane, make us an offer. Let's just do it.

If we get it, God's opening that door. Not really, you might get it. You might make an offer, and they accept it.

That's not a God door, necessarily. Why don't you come down a little bit, pray about it, live below your means, make some wise decisions, think back, move methodical, think things through. That's how God moves, using wisdom.

See, a lot of times we think, well, God will just show me, God will confirm, and he will. Thank God for confirmation. I'm praying for confirmation on a few different things this week.

Thank God for it. Thank God you'll show me. But often, it's through wisdom.

Is this wise? Is this wise? Many of you know, we've been looking for buildings for a while, and I can find buildings real easy, but they want \$10,000 a month. They want me to make \$100,000 in tenant improvements for them. Is that wise? Of course not.

How about you make the improvements, and you cut down our rent, and then we'll make it work. No, no, no, can't do that. We'll see, wise as serpents.

Wise, gentle though, understanding, compassionate, right? That's how we should live our lives. Wisdom cries out. That's why you don't know if it's a God thing or a good thing.

Wisdom cries out, and that's why I would encourage you. How do you get wisdom? So many people are never in this. They wonder why their life is falling apart.

Look at Proverbs we're in right now. If you just look at Proverbs 1, it'll say the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. Proverbs 1 also says that do not try to get money with dishonest gain.

It'll end up robbing you of life. And then I just turn a little bit farther to Proverbs 3. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Remember the famous verse? Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path. I'm confident that would end some of your problems right there. Remember, trust in the Lord with all, not some, all of your heart.

Give it to Him and trust that He is directing you, that He is guiding you. And then you can turn to Proverbs 6, and it says these things, these six things the Lord hates, yea, seven, are an abomination to Him. Oh gosh, I might wanna know what the Lord hates.

A lying tongue, a lying tongue. Proud look, arrogance, a lying tongue. He's nailing us, isn't He? The Lord hates these things, a lying tongue, a proud look, hands that shed innocent blood, feet that are swift to running to evil.

What about a heart that devises wicked plans? One who bears false witness and one who sows discord among the brethren. Did you catch that last one? God hates those who sow discord among the brethren. So it begs the question, are we sowing discord here? Or are we protecting, are we, that's what wise is a serpent, gentle is a dove.

Gentle is a dove is I'm protecting. I'm not sowing discord. God hates that.

And then you can turn to Proverbs, which I've quoted before, six, where it talks about stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant, but he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of hell. And you just keep going. Life and death are in the power of the tongue.

The integrity of the upright will guide them. Commit your works to the Lord and your thoughts will be established. You just start putting wisdom in so you can make decisions based on the word of God.

That's wisdom. Look at that one. That one has helped me so much.

The integrity of the upright will guide them. And then hang that with a good name is to be chosen over great riches, and you'll make a lot better financial decisions. The integrity of the upright will guide them.

Doesn't say you'll make more money. Integrity will guide you. So wisdom cries out.

We just need to embrace it. And here's some examples. What about money schemes? The lady I just gave, it doesn't end there.

Churches are prime targets for this. Hey, give me 10,000, here's your investment. Or money schemes, or these different things, right? Give me this and you'll get this.

Well, what does wise as serpent, gentle as a dove mean? Here's what you do, here's what I do. Thank you so much for that information. I'll let you know.

You know, somebody says something, thank you. I appreciate that. I'll let you know.

Let me consider it. Versus gullible, taking it in, or being mean and nasty and saying, no, this is a scam, you get out of here kind of thing. So it's all, you see, it's wise in how we handle things, but it's gentle in our demeanor.

So you need to be wise and gentle, loving yet firm. What about relationships? We've gotta use, and the reason I'm talking about money, relationships, our thought life, and not trusting in feelings, those are really the themes of Proverbs. If you read the entire book of Proverbs, there's themes in it about sexual purity, about not trusting in riches and all these things.

But another big one other than money is relationships. Sometimes we're so gullible, right? I like how that looks. So we better have a relationship because I like how that looks.

No, that's not biblical counsel. That's not wisdom. Wisdom cries out.

Wisdom says, listen, use wisdom in these areas. Is that person following hard after Christ? Do they love God just as much as you do? Are they building you up spiritually or pulling you down? Wisdom, wisdom cries out in the street to us. Our thought life as well.

A lot of Proverbs has a lot to say when Jesus says be wise as a serpent. Wisdom all begins up here, right? Our thought life. I keep seeing more and more posts on the terrorism.

That's not helping things. We need to be very careful on what we feed our mind on. Am I concerned about it? Sure.

But I'm not gonna dwell on those things that the Bible says don't dwell on. Pray, pray. If we spent as much time praying as on Facebook, we would see revival.

Said that a few months ago. Wisdom in our thought life. And then of course, one of the last things Proverbs talks about is not trusting in feelings.

So when Jesus says be wise as a serpent and gentle as a dove, be wise as a serpent but not trusting your feelings. Don't trust, I feel a certain way, I feel. Make sure that those feelings line up with Scripture.

D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, a great preacher about 1940s, 50s, and 60s, he said you never interpret, and I've always remembered this, you never interpret Scripture in light of your feelings. You interpret your feelings through the light of Scripture. So our feelings must go through this filter.

In other words, I'm feeling a certain way, right? Single people say, I'm feeling like dating this person. Well, do they line up? Well, no, not really, but I'm feeling, well, no. Back up, wisdom cries out, wisdom cries out.

Or those who are married, right? I'm feeling that this marriage is drifting. I'm feeling, and I'm not, and those feelings can begin to bitter, or you begin to bring in bitterness and resentment, right? And the marriage starts to go down the toilet. Well, wisdom cries out.

Wisdom says, no, come back and look at the wisdom. No, I don't wanna do that. Well, it says, come, look at me.

It cries out. The Bible says it cries out. Look to me.

Not only look to me and be saved, but look to me and be restructured in your life. Look to me and be redirected to God. So we don't have a lot of time, but I wanna focus on these four things in the closing points with wisdom's cry.

Wisdom's cry, paralleling with what Jesus says. You can find all this in Proverbs 1. Number one, wisdom must be sought. And I could spend a lot of time here, but we have spent a lot of time here in the last few months on hearing the word of God and doing it, right? So you have to remember this.

Wisdom must be sought. Wisdom must be sought. It won't just come up and slap you upside the head and you have to do it.

Wisdom must be sought. As a matter of fact, your flesh will go the opposite direction of wisdom. Remember how I often say the flesh will lead you in default mode? If you don't do anything, you'll go the wrong direction.

That's a little discouraging, isn't it? If you don't do anything, you don't open the word of God, you don't read, you don't, nothing, I'm just gonna do nothing. You'll just, you'll just gravitate away from God, away from wisdom. So wisdom, if you want wisdom tonight, if you wanna say, Lord, I've been making wrong decisions.

Lord, I need wisdom. I need answers in this area financially, relationally. Lord, I need wisdom, would you help me? It has to be sought out.

It has to be sought. Where do you seek it at? The prayer closet, during worship, in the word of God, you seek it out and then God answers. But so many people want the answer without the seeking.

They wanna find something, but they don't wanna look for it. Now, where did I put my car keys? I'm just gonna sit on the couch and wait for them. How silly does that sound? That's what we do.

God, answer me. I want to, answer me. Just answer me.

I'm gonna sit here, put up my feet on the couch, watch Fox News or CNN for three hours and just wait for God to answer these things. Watch all the commercials, all the, and just be, your feelings being drawn in and like, Lord, I need answers. He's saying, seek me.

Seek me with all of your heart. Sought the truth and you will find it. So if you want wisdom, you have to seek it.

It's not gonna come find you. Why? Because the flesh doesn't want it. I'll just be real with you.

The flesh does not want God's wisdom. The world sure doesn't want God's wisdom and much of the church doesn't want God's wisdom. We wanna look for teachers who will tell us what we wanna hear.

We don't wanna seek after these types of things. Proverbs 1A, listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Obviously, he's talking to the teenagers here.

But also, the father's instruction, the mother's teaching, you have to assume that it was the word of God. So he said, listen, do not forsake the word of God. Come back to it.

Come back to it. Anytime you see somebody drifting off course, guess what? They've forsaken the word of God. And it's a sad thing to see.

Have you ever seen a life going a great direction, start going this direction? It's very sad to watch. It's very hard because they've forsaken the right path. But wisdom still cries out, doesn't it? It still cries out to them.

Turn back to me. Seek me. And then number two, we have to remember this.

Wisdom involves warfare. Seeking God's wisdom involves warfare. Proverbs 110, my son, if sinful men entice you, do not give in to them.

Sin will entice you. I don't care if you're 15 or five or 55 or 75, sin will entice you. So wisdom involves warfare.

There is warfare. Finding this hidden treasure, seeking after this great thing of wisdom, there is warfare. God wants you to have it, the devil doesn't.

And there'll be warfare. There'll be a contending for that. There'll be a fight.

There'll be a battle for wisdom. Why do you think, on a different note, why do you think in our nation right now, why do you think they're trying to remove God's wisdom from everything? That's why. It's warfare.

Get God's wisdom out of everything. Get him out of the schools. Get it out of everything.

Why? Every man doing what is right in his own heart according to his own lust and his own desires. There's nothing new. So wisdom, there is warfare.

I think we forget that. Sometimes we think life's getting challenging, right? It's like, oh, forget it, this isn't worth it. God, I thought that, well, yeah.

Yeah, it's warfare. The devil wants to destroy your marriage and your marriage and your marriage and my marriage. The devil wants to take kids away from God.

He wants to get them caught up in all these things. It's warfare. And I think if we're prepared for warfare, we can be better prepared.

We can see the onslaught of the enemy. Wisdom must start, this is number three. Here's where it all starts.

Wisdom must start with the fear of God. Proverbs 1.7, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Isn't that interesting? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

To fear God is the beginning, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. So it begs the question, do you despise instruction? How do you take constructive criticism? That's a good gauge. A fool says, I don't want any of that.

I don't want to hear wisdom, because I'm right. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. And I think it's a healthy to fear God.

I do, I'll tell my kids that. Fear God, fear God, fear Christ. He's my savior, but he's also my judge.

A.W. Tozer said, I fear him because he is my judge, and I love him because he's my savior. That we see that dual nature there. The fourth point, wisdom must be obeyed.

Then I hate to even bring this up again, because we're bringing it up a lot, but we have to say it. Wisdom can't just be heard. It can't be just preached from.

We can't have a lot of heads going, uh-huh. That sounds really good. Wisdom to be effective has to be obeyed.

So I think we need a lot more Christians, including ourselves, to stop saying amen and start saying, Lord, how do I do it? Let me do it tonight. I know there's areas in our own lives that we need to make wise decisions, even tonight. Instead of running from them, let's make them, and watch God honor that.

Because here's why. I'm just reading Scripture, Proverbs 1, verse 11. It's talking about wisdom.

There is a cost. At the end of your life, you will groan when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, how I hated discipline, how my heart spurned correction.

I would not obey my teachers or turn my ears to my instructors, and I was soon in serious trouble in the assembly of God's people. Wisdom cries out. There is a cost.

Before I came here, I actually visited a guy I just found out yesterday. He's got terminal cancer. I just stopped by there on my way to church here, but he would say this.

Heroin addict for many years, ran from God, crying so hard he can't even stand up. Look what this says. At the end of my life, you'll groan.

Your flesh and your body are spent. You will say, how I hated discipline, how I hated it, how my heart and my body spurned correction. I would not obey my teachers or turn my ear to my instructors, and I was soon in serious trouble.

And that's how it works. There's a cost. I mean, I wish I could be all rosy and happy and joyful and loving, but there's a cost of disobeying wisdom.

The Bible says it. We need to preach it again. See, I think, I truly believe when you preach all the counsel of God, you'll see life change.

I don't have to worry about, did you like it? What'd you think? Oh, was it too much? Was it too little? I don't care. I mean, if you wanna offer constructive criticism, absolutely. Everybody needs that, but I'm not gonna walk around wondering, oh, gosh, I didn't know.

Should I add that last part? Oh, man. You know, and then you're always just preaching. Here's what God's Word says.

Do it with the right heart and see life's changed. But there is hope. Proverbs 120, out in the open, wisdom calls aloud.

She's calling to you even tonight. She raises her voice in the public square. There's no excuses.

On top of the wall, she cries out. At the city gates, she makes her speech. She says, how long, how long, you who are simple, will you love your simple ways? How long? Wisdom knows, doesn't she? She says, how long will you keep rejecting me? How long, turn back to me.

How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? Wisdom says, repent of my rebuke. Then I will pour out my thoughts to you. I will make known to you my teachings.

Isn't that interesting? Insight into God follows repentance. Not just repentance to salvation. I'm talking to some people in this room who might need to repent tonight.

Lord, I've been rejecting wisdom. I've been rejecting your truth. Lord, I repent of that.

Would you make your will clear to me tonight? Would you make your ways clear to me tonight? I need you to answer this and I need to make a decision. Lord, I repent and turn back to you and he will open up the floodgates and begin to reveal things to you. Either that's true or this is wrong.

Repent of my rebuke. That tells me a good, healthy rebuke is in order sometimes. Right? Listen, I've been around long enough.

If you don't rebuke some things, people don't repent. Hopefully you won't use this sermon so I can say this, but you're not gonna see a lot of people turning on Joelstein tomorrow, right? Repenting. Oh my God, I've been so wrong.

Lord of the family, let's get on our hands and knees. You're just not gonna see it. There's no rebuke.

There's no rebuke, so there's no repentance. Now, do we need encouraging messages sometimes? Of course, we need to balance both of those. But look what it says, repent at my rebuke.

Repent at my rebuke, then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings. So if you're a young adult, you've been out of God's will, you've been maybe disobeying your parents, you've been, you know, just whatever it is, God says, listen, just turn back from the rebuke where you're convicted and I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings. That's powerful, because that's a way that we can realign our hearts with God.

And even if not everybody needs to repent, all of us need to say, Lord, give me a hunger for your truth, give me a hunger for wisdom. Lord, I need to know your will, especially in these dire times. It's gonna get harder and harder to discern God's will if you're not in his word.

As the world goes chaotic, guess what most people are gonna wanna do? They're gonna go chaotic. Lives are gonna go chaotic, make wrong spending habits, they're gonna move across the country when they shouldn't have, they're gonna do this, they're gonna do that, all because they lack wisdom.

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