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Date: 14 June 2020

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[ 0 : 00 ] Amen. Good morning. I won't introduce myself because I know all of you. It's good to be back with you again. Good to see so many of you after so long.

Thanks for your commitment to this community and so many of you who have tuned in from afar and so many of you who have stepped up and served in new ways and continued serving in old ways.

We just praise God for the way he's held us together as one community following Jesus together. This morning we're going to continue in the book of Proverbs.

If you've been with us, you know we started that a few weeks ago. The book of Proverbs is a book about wisdom. Wisdom is skill and the art of living. It's how we navigate the path that God's given us in this life and it's how we stay on the path.

The beginning of wisdom, its very start, its foundation is the fear of the Lord, which I've been telling you from one man is an attitude of submission, respect, dependence, and worship. And as it begins with the fear of the Lord, it continues with a characteristic of humility and teachability.

[ 1 : 12 ] We start with the fear of the Lord, but if we want to grow in wisdom, we want to continue in wisdom. We have to be people who are humble, who are willing to learn. Now, if there's anything we've learned over the last few months, certainly that the foundations, the things that we rested on in this world are perhaps a little less secure than we thought they were.

The world's maybe a little more fragile than we would have admitted last year or realized. And sometimes there's disasters that come and some people run towards those disasters and some people run away from them.

If we had known in 2019 what was going to happen in 2020, maybe we would have done certain things differently. Maybe we would have prepared in a certain way. Of course, that's true of many aspects in life.

There's a preparation for what's to come. There's a mitigation of preparing for what might happen in terms of disaster. And that's what the author of Proverbs is going to tell us about this week.

We're going to look at how do we prepare for what's to come in this life. How can we be ready when disaster comes?

[ 2 : 30 ] We're going to hear about a storm. So our question is, how do we survive? How do we prepare for the storm that's to come? It's with that that we're going to turn to Proverbs 1, verse 20.

I invite you to turn there with me in your Bibles or in your worship guide or your phone. And as we come to Proverbs 1, remember that this is God's word. In Proverbs 30, verse 5 tells us that every word of God proves true.

He is a shield to those who take refuge in him. And so that's why we read now in chapter 1, starting at verse 20. Wisdom cries aloud in the street.

In the markets, she raises her voice. At the head of the noisy streets, she cries out. At the entrance of the city gates, she speaks. How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?

How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge? Verse 23. If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you.

[ 3 : 34 ] I will make my words known to you. Because I have called and you refused to listen, have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded, because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity.

I will mock when terror strikes you, when terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you.

Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer. They will seek me diligently, but will not find me. Verse 29. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord and would have

none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their ways and have their fill of their own devices.

For the simple are killed by their turning away and the complacency of fools destroys them. But whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease without dread of disaster.

Father, I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our Father in heaven, we thank you that you don't leave us alone, but instead you speak to us by your word.

[ 4 : 55 ] You, like a good Father, warn us of things that are going to come in the path of life. You prepare us for what's to come ahead.

We ask that you would do that this morning, that you would send your Holy Spirit to encourage us and stir us up by your word. And you'd also send him to convict us that we would have soft and tender hearts, hearts that are open to you and your wisdom.

We ask that you would do that now and that you teach us by your word. We ask these things not because we've earned them or deserved them, but because we can ask them in Jesus' name.

Amen. As I mentioned when I was giving the announcements, today is June the 14th, and I'm curious if you remember what happened two years ago on June the 12th and 13th.

We are right at the two-year anniversary of something. If you were living in Colorado Springs two years ago, I can guarantee you, you haven't forgotten about this. Very beginning of June, we got hit by one of the worst hailstorms in recent memory.

And you all remember, that was the first of two hailstorms that summer. And what I remember about that hailstorm, first of all, I didn't really know anything about hail because I had just moved to Colorado Springs a year before that, and hail was just a concept at that point.

[ 6 : 24 ] But what I remembered about that was that there was no warning. No one told us there was going to be a hailstorm that night. It just happened. Now, the following hailstorm, the one that happened, I believe, in August of that summer, we had some warning.

And so there was more of a chance to take cover. Both hailstorms were destructive. Some people had to have their roofs replaced twice. It's great for those who had it, who delayed and only had it replaced the second time.

Well, that highlights something for us that there are two kinds of storms in this world. Sometimes there's storms that we know about. We can see them coming. And then sometimes there's storms that just happen without any warning.

I was caught without warning. My car was outside when the first hailstorm hit. When the second hailstorm hit, I had just picked up a rental car to have my first car worked on. That's another story.

But there are two kinds of storms, right? And we face storms in this life. And in this section of Proverbs, we're told that calamity can come. When we don't follow wisdom, it can happen like a storm.

[ 7 : 26 ] And the reason that it's compared to a storm is that it's going to feel in some ways like something that's unexpected. It's going to come up in a moment. That's what we see here in verses 26 and 27.

Wisdom is going to laugh at people who haven't listened to her when terror strikes them like a storm. And calamity comes like a whirlwind.

There's these storms in life, in other words, that we can live without wisdom. We can live in foolishness for a certain amount of time and feel like we're getting away with it. We can feel like there's not going to be any consequences and that what we're doing is working until the moment that the storm finally comes.

There can be a disconnect sometimes between our present actions and how it's going to affect us in the future. And so we're going to look at that storm this morning. We're going to see a few things. First, the reality of the storm, then the characters of the storm, and then the escape from the storm. The reality of the storm, the characters of the storm, and the escape from the storm.

[ 8 : 36 ] We've already sort of talked about the reality of the storm. Wisdom is warning us that if we ignore her for long enough, we will face a storm. In fact, this is true. We know this intuitively of many areas of life.

For example, if you don't save, which, by the way, is a major topic in the book of Proverbs, money. If you don't save, say maybe you don't save for retirement, you don't save in general, you'll be fine for a while.

You won't feel any consequences for a while. You might think, this is working great. There's no reason I need to change my behavior until one day the storm comes.

One day you need the money. You don't have the money. Book of Proverbs talks about alcohol. You might abuse alcohol for a time. You might think, this is fine. It's not affecting me in any big way. I just have a large supply of ibuprofen in the morning, and I can keep doing this until one day the storm comes and your health finally catches up with you.

[ 9 : 40 ] It can happen in your work. The book of Proverbs talks about people who are lazy, the sluggard. Maybe you're not doing a great job for a time and you're on pace with your peers. You're at the same point in your career, and then suddenly you wake up one day and you realize that they've advanced several levels ahead of you, and you're still in the same place.

Maybe even worse, you're losing your job. It can happen in the other way. Maybe there's overwork, and you think, I can keep running at this pace. I'm not facing the consequences yet, and then one day, doing too much for too long catches up, and your heart and your mind and your body begin to shut down.

This can happen in your relationships as well. Maybe you do what the Proverbs warns against. You're foolish with your words and your emotions. Seems to be working for a time, and then one day it catches up with you, and the people that you wanted and thought were close to you are all walking away.

There will come a time when foolishness catches up with us. There will come a time when we get what we've wished for. That's what verse 31 tells us. Therefore, they shall eat the fruit of their way and have their fill of their own devices.

There's a time when it's too late to turn back the clock. There can come a time if we ignore wisdom for long enough.

[ 11 : 03 ] Wisdom will also ignore us. There's a tragedy that's coming, and sometimes we can't go back. There is a real and true storm.

Now, I've talked about this real and true storm in the sense of physical consequences, right? Our health and our money and our friendships. There's also a real storm spiritually.

It's easy to ignore God for a time and not to face any of the consequences. You might think, oh, this is fine.

I'm living my life. There's these Christians who pay attention to God, but I am having just as good of a life as they are. Therefore, I don't understand why it's important for me to embrace Jesus Christ. Well, the same thing is true spiritually that's true of all these examples physically. We can get away and get along for a time, and one day the storm is going to come.

[ 12 : 10 ] Spiritually, when we talk about the storm, we're talking about the fact that one day we are going to face God as the great judge of this world. It will happen either when we die or when Jesus Christ returns to the earth for his church.

And so whether it's in this life or it's in our relationship with God, our present actions affect future consequences.

And just because we don't see a storm now does not mean the storm isn't coming. And so wisdom cries out to us.

Will we listen in time? We're told in this passage that not only does wisdom cry out, but there's going to come a time when it will be too late to turn back.

That's what we're told in verse 28. Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer. They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. In other words, wisdom cries out to you and you don't listen. One day you will cry out to wisdom and wisdom won't listen.

[ 13 : 21 ] There will be a moment when it's too late to turn back. And so there's an urgency. There's an urgency to embracing wisdom, to embracing the cry, to change now, to prepare for the storm before it's too late because there will come a moment when the clock cannot be turned back.

That is the reality of the storm. If that's the reality of the storm and wisdom is crying out, there's of course a variety of ways to respond, to answer the call from wisdom.

And that's where we find the characters of the storm. We're given three characters here. In verse 22, we meet someone called the simple, we meet the fool, and the scoffer.

Now the simple person is someone who doesn't really understand what we've just talked about. The simple person doesn't understand the relationship between present actions and future consequences. The simple person is very naive.

The simple person hasn't committed. We talked last week about the fact that there are really only two paths when it comes to wisdom. We can embrace the path of wisdom, and if we don't embrace that path, we're automatically on the path of foolishness.

[14:36] There are only two ways to live. There's only two ways to go. And so the foolish person or the simple person is technically on the foolish path because they haven't embraced the wise path. But what's different about the foolish person from the other two is that the foolish person, there's still some hope for them.

They're open. They're naive. They're described by some people as gullible, but there's still some hope for them to return to the path of wisdom. And so you'll notice in verse 22, wisdom actually is only crying out to the simple.

When she mentions scoffers and fools, she's just commenting on them. She's not even inviting them. The fool is someone who can be invited to do what's right, has not made that commitment yet, or the simple is invited to do what's right, hasn't made the commitment.

So in that sense, the simple person is a fool, but there's hope that they might become wise. Now, when it came to hailstorms, I was a simple person.

I was not a fool, at least not yet. So I was unaware of how hailstorms worked. I knew them as a theoretical concept. I didn't realize the danger. I didn't hear wisdom crying out to me.

[15:47] My car was on the street on the night of June 12th, 2018. The great irony was that while I typically did not have access to the garage in the house I was living in, one of my housemates was out of town and there was a garage slot open.

However, I didn't take advantage of it. I was simple. But I was open to the call to wisdom. So that night when the hailstorm started, one of my housemates came and knocked on my door and woke me up, told me, your car is on the street and it's hailing right now.

You need to bring it in. So this is the call of wisdom to the simple person, right? So I ran out, except it was hailing and it was huge hail. It was dangerous for people to run out in. So she gave me her snowboarding helmet and I had the top of a rubbermaid bin.

It's my shield to guard myself. And I ran out into the hail. I got into my car and I started and I pulled it into the driveway, into the garage, and it was already too late.

My car had already been wrecked by hail. So I was the simple person, right? And I didn't respond quickly enough. There's a true urgency.

[17:02] What we're being taught here, in part, is that there's not a time to sit and consider wisdom. The time to respond to wisdom is now. The time to respond is now when it comes to circumstances in our life and the time to respond now when it comes to embracing Jesus Christ.

That no one of us knows the day or the hour that we'll face the Lord. And there may come a time where the cry of wisdom is too late.

The cry of wisdom is too late in our personal lives. There are some things that happen. And there are some things that people in our community do that we can't just turn the clock back on.

I had comprehensive coverage. So my car was fixed. And it cost Geico thousands of dollars.

And it cost me an enormous headache, right? My housemate could not turn the clock back on that for me. The call to the simple had not happened fast enough. We also meet the scoffer and the fool.

[18:10] The fool is worse than the simple because the fool is not open in the way the simple is.

The simple can still be pulled onto the path of wisdom. The fool is set. Remember, we've talked about the fact from Proverbs 12 that the fool is wise in his own eyes.

So the fool is convinced he knows everything. So the fool is going to hear the cry. The fool is going to be confronted by people and friends and mentors who describe to him how foolish his life is, how the path he's on is going to lead to destruction.

The fool's not going to listen. Now, we've met people like this. I'm sure you have people like this in your family or your friend group. Many people come and say, look, the path that you're on is not going to end well.

But they're wise in their own eyes, right? The fool keeps going. So that's why we see wisdom is not crying out to the fool. The scoffer is even worse.

The scoffer's like the fool, except the scoffer has this mocking tendency, makes fun of the wise. The scoffer's vindictive. The scoffer's sarcastic and cynical.

[19:19] The scoffer's the kind of person that always points out what's wrong and never sees what's right. The scoffer takes being wise in their own eyes to an extreme. Of course, if you've lived

in this world long enough, you've met people like this as well.

And the challenge from wisdom is to the simple. Turn back before it's too late. Turn back before it's too late because there's going to come a time when things can't be undone.

When this storm comes, you can't go back in time and redo. Of course, I would love to go back, right, and park my car in the garage on June 12th.

That's not an option. Better to learn the easy way than the hard way. Learn in verse 31, the fool, if the simple doesn't embrace wisdom, the simple's going to eat the fruit of their way and have their fill of their own devices.

Verse 28, they're going to call upon wisdom, but wisdom won't be there to answer. And so, the application here for us is simple.

[ 20 : 38 ] Listen. Listen to wisdom before it's too late. Listen to wisdom before it's too late.

We've seen the reality of the storm, that there are real storms coming in this life, physically, materially, and also spiritually. We've seen the characters of the storm, that there are a variety of ways to respond when we're being warned about the storm.

But there's also an escape from the storm, and that's what we see here in verses 20 through 24.

Wisdom is crying out. Wisdom isn't doing something in secret. Wisdom isn't doing this in a seminar that you have to be invited to and pay money for.

No, wisdom's crying aloud in the streets, verse 20, in the markets she raises her voice. Wisdom is not a respecter of persons. She's not crying out only to some classes and not to others. She's not crying out only to rich, but not to poor.

No, she's crying out in public to everyone. Anyone and everyone can have access to wisdom. She's loud. She's urgent. She's highlighting the fact that the decision has to be made, and all they have to do is listen.

[ 21 : 52 ] She's crying out. She's speaking. Verse 23, if you turn at my reproof, in other words, if you listen and do what I've told you to do, I will make my words known to you.

I'll speak to you. Verse 24, she's called out and you refuse to what? Refuse to listen. I stretch out my hand and no one has heeded.

In other words, no one has listened. Verse 25, you have ignored all my counsel. In other words, no one listened. The call of wisdom is for everyone and the call of wisdom is a limited time offer.

And so the time to act is now. The time to listen is now. wisdom doesn't just cry out and call.

Wisdom also makes it easy. The command here is not that we pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, not that we go off on some journey where we have to put together a habit tracker and make sure we're setting a new set, a new threshold and bar that we have to jump over every day.

[ 23 : 05 ] wisdom actually offers to help us and give us everything we need. You know, there are many adventures in Colorado Springs that if you want to be successful and you have no experience, you're going to want to hire a guide.

If you've never hunted before and you decide this is something I want to get into, you can hire someone to help you and show you the way. If you want to be a fly fisher, you don't know the right spots to go to, you can hire someone to come with you.

Wisdom here is telling us she is there to be a guide but we don't have to hire her. She's actually free. We don't have to hire wisdom.

We don't have to pay anything. She offers her services to anyone who's willing to accept them.

That's what we see in verse 23. If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you.

I will make my words known to you. This is freely available. Not only am I going to be your guide, not only am I going to take you on the hunting trip, I'm going to provide the guns that you need.

[ 24 : 13 ] I'm bringing all the food with us. I'm packing everything. All you have to do is get in the car. That's what wisdom is offering.

Wisdom is offering to empower and enable. whatever we need, all we have to do is listen and accept. All we have to do is receive the correction, what here is called reproof.

Verse 23 and 25. All we have to do is here to turn away from foolishness and to turn to wisdom. If the simple person teaches us anything, it's this.

There is no middle ground. ultimately, we either choose to be wise or we choose to be foolish. And so we have to listen before it's too late.

We have to heed wisdom before it's too late. If we're people who have faith in Jesus Christ, we heed the call of wisdom in all sorts of areas of life. We heed the call of wisdom in our relationships

before they're destroyed.

[ 25 : 20 ] We heed the call of wisdom when it comes to the way we treat food and drink before we hurt ourselves and others. We heed the call of wisdom when it comes to dealing with those who have more power than us and those who have less power.

We heed the call of wisdom when it comes to bringing justice and loving goodness. Because God wants us to walk well in this world. He doesn't want us to face the disaster that happens when we disregard wisdom.

If you're not a Christian, remember that the beginning of wisdom, the beginning of knowledge is the fear of the Lord. And so before we embrace anything else, we have to embrace Jesus Christ.

We can't have wisdom without Him. And just like there's a coming storm in the physical circumstances of this life, there's a coming destruction that while things may seem good now, there is a time and a day when Jesus is going to return to this earth.

And if we die before then, we will also have to face Him. And so no matter how good things are going now, we need to be prepared for that. And so we do that as the author of Proverbs tells us by receiving the reproof, which is a repentance word, a turning away from sin, repenting of our sins and turning to Jesus Christ.

[ 26 : 42 ] No matter what we do, we have to remember the lesson of the simple and embrace wisdom now because it is urgent. embrace wisdom now because wisdom provides everything that we need.

It invites us to go on a journey and she supplies everything that's needed for the path. I've been telling you as we've been going through the book of Proverbs about Matthew 12, verse 42, which tells us that Jesus is greater than Solomon.

He's the great wisdom teacher. He's even greater. He teaches us more than what we learn in the Proverbs. But that's not the only aspect of wisdom that we see in Jesus.

We're also told in Colossians 2, verse 3, that in Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We're told in 1 Corinthians 1, verse 24, that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

In other words, Jesus doesn't just teach us wisdom. He is the full and final and greatest embodiment of God's wisdom. This woman represents wisdom, lady wisdom, in Proverbs 1.

[ 27 : 55 ] Jesus is the greatest fulfillment and embodiment of God's wisdom. That's why we're told in verse 29, hating knowledge means not choosing the fear of the Lord.

Jesus is the one who comes and actually allows us to have true fear of the Lord, not fear of punishment, but fear of displeasing the God who offers us salvation.

And we know even more than people in the Old Testament about this spirit that's going to be poured out in verse 23. How is it that we're going to be given everything we need for the journey of wisdom?

Well, it's because God is pouring out his spirit on us because of Jesus Christ. He offers us not worldly wisdom, not wisdom we have to create and build, but wisdom that he gives us through his word and by his spirit.

And so God provides everything needed for wisdom for those who will simply hear and listen in turn. God doesn't just change our hearts. He gives us a new and true desire for wisdom.

[ 29 : 02 ] And he helps us to grow in it. He helps us through his word. He helps us through his spirit and he helps us through the community that he's given us in one another in the church that we would have what we need to listen to wisdom.

wisdom. So how is it that we are prepared? How is it that we look forward knowing that we're ready for the storms that are to come? We have to know that the storm is real.

We have to choose not the way of the simple but the way of the wise, the person who embraces wisdom and listens. That's how we're ready for what is to come spiritually and physically in this world.

In his book Deep Survival Who Lives Who Dies and Why a man named Lawrence Gonzalez tells the time that he spent at the Vermont Wilderness Survival School with a man named Mark Morey. And during that time in the survival school they would spend time walking through the forest together and one thing that Mark taught him is that he had to listen to the birds because the birds were what he called the radars of the forest.

[ 30 : 19 ] That when the birds were making noise it was time to listen because there was something going on. That reminded Lawrence of another time when he was hiking on the U.S.-Mexico border and it was incredibly hot outside it was over 100 degrees and so he wasn't thinking very clearly but he was with a hiking partner and this woman he was hiking with at one point put out her hand and stopped him on the trail.

He looked up and what was there making noise but a bird there was a blue jay who was screeching. He looked up at the blue jay that was screeching and then his guide pointed him to the ground and he saw right in front of them across the path a huge rattlesnake that had just devoured the little baby of the blue jay.

the blue jay was crying out warning him of the danger that was to come and all he had to do was listen.

Wisdom is crying out. All we have to do is listen and live. I invite you to pray with me.

Our Father in heaven we praise you and we thank you that you don't let us stumble and wander along but instead you cry out with your wisdom.

[ 31 : 46 ] You invite us to walk with you on a journey that you provide everything we need. We ask that you do this now that you if we're simple that you stir up our hearts to commit to you and be wise.

If we're scoffers you'd soften our hearts and convict them of sin and that if you're foolish we're foolish you'd help us to know that we shouldn't be wise in our own eyes but we need to learn from you.

Ask that you'd encourage us that you give us your spirit that we don't walk the way of wisdom alone but it's a place that we walk with you as our guide and our comforter.

We praise you that we can learn these things from your word together that we can worship you with one voice. So we ask these things not because we've earned them or deserve them but we ask them in Jesus' name.

Amen.