

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 23RD-24TH, 2019 // BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

TAINED (ECCLESIASTES 10:1-4)

A LITTLE STUPIDITY GOES A LONG WAY

The Bible is full of examples of how letting a little bit of foolishness in can ruin an entire environment. Solomon uses the example of a fly getting into expensive perfume.

- It's not that God is against us having fun, but **when we are foolish with the important things in life, carelessness can take over and ruin them.**

THE CHRISTIAN IS CALLED TO BE DILIGENT

The dynamic follower of God takes care in even the mundane things of life. When we take the time to do things well, it opens up margin in our lives to be more carefree.

- We must mature in our faith. **When we mature in our faith we mature in our actions. This maturity protects us from the curve balls in life.**

A "WISE PERSON" PROTECTS THEIR HEART

If allowing the mundane to slip can hurt us, think how much damage we can do if our hearts become tainted. We often worry so much about our public lives that we forget to address the state of our private hearts.

- **Without prayer, meditation on scripture, and worship, sin will creep into our hearts and completely corrupt us.**
- **Matt. 6:22-23 (CSB)**

WE MUST PROTECT AND PREPARE

Not only do we have to protect our hearts and minds from evil, but we have to prepare for the evil that will come against us.

- **We are not to isolate ourselves from the world, but we must insulate ourselves with God's Spirit. Pray, read, be around other believers.**

WHAT IS IN WILL COME OUT (V3-V4)

If we don't protect and prepare, what's inside our hearts will come out. V4 says, "calmness puts great offense at rest," but when there is sin in our hearts we often lose our cool and expose our "lack of sense" like a fool.

- We can only hide our true selves so long. **What is in our hearts will eventually be acted upon.**

WORKING SMARTER (ECCLESIASTES 10:5-11)

"THE FOOL IS APPOINTED TO GREAT HEIGHTS"

Sometimes we put the wrong people in places of authority. This can be because we often value big personalities more than substance, integrity, and work ethic.

- We also sometimes forget that because of many people's backgrounds, they don't get the same opportunities as more fortunate people.

THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CHURCH

If God has a heart for the underdog, the church should as well. The reason we hear so much about the poor, the immigrant, and the broken, is because God tends to do His best work with desperate people.

- The church has an opportunity to be an equalizer in society. **We can give hope to people the world often overlooks.**

WITH GOD, WE CAN ALL STEP UP

Though many people don't get the best opportunities, with God we can all step up and be something amazing for His kingdom.

- Despite our backgrounds and mistakes, **with God's wisdom, grace, and the help of His church, anyone can lead a truly successful life. The Spirit is bigger than our circumstances.**

"THE ONE THAT DIGS A PIT MAY FALL INTO IT"

Though we can do our best to prepare, sometimes bad things just happen. We need to be careful to not under or over spiritualize things.

- "The rain falls on the just and the unjust" (Matt. 5:45) just like troubles happen to all of us. **We must be rooted in the Spirit so we respond well.**

WE ARE TO "SHARPEN THE EDGE" OF OUR AXES

Solomon advocates unhurried thinking, thoughtful reading, and preparation time so when we do the things we do, we are as sharp as we can be.

- In our busy and distracted lives, we often forget how important quiet meditation can be. **We all need to "be still and know He is God" (Ps. 46:10).**

SOME OF US ARE JUST TOO LAZY

Like a charmer that is too lazy to charm his snake, **we get bit by life when we take shortcuts and don't work at the level we are capable of.**

- Dave Ramsey said, "I will take teachable and hard working over talented 10 out of 10 times." **Even the most gifted will not be used if they resort to laziness.**

WISE WORDS (ECCLESIASTES 10:12-20)

OUR WORDS ARE VITALLY IMPORTANT

The Bible has a lot to say about how we talk. Words reveal what is inside our hearts and our tongues can either build people up or drastically tear them down (Js. 3:1-12).

- Pr. 18:21 says, "The tongue holds the power of life and death." **Our words hold more power than we give them credit for.**

FOOLISH PEOPLE MAKE TWO MISTAKES

First, they speak before putting much thought into what they're saying. Second, they talk too much.

- Once something is said, it is out there and impossible to retract. **A wise person thinks before they speak and holds their tongue until they have something substantial to say.**

THE FOOL ALSO CLAIMS TO FORESEE THE FUTURE

Though Solomon says, "No one knows what will happen," how often do people try to tell us they know what the future holds?

- **This is why we must trust in God's will for us, because He alone holds the future.** We also need to be cautious to claim prophecies or that we have heard from God.

FOOLS HAVE DREAMS BUT NO DIRECTION

V15 says, "they don't know how to go to the city." **This means having lofty aspirations without any plans or dependence on God for help makes one look like a fool.**

- The Bible says it is better to finish than to start (Ecc. 7). **It isn't that we shouldn't dream or aspire, but we must also plan and ask God's will.**

GOOD LEADERSHIP MATTERS

Not only is the ability of the leadership of a nation, business, or church important, but the character of the leader is as well. **The idea that private lives don't affect public matters is not supported in scripture.**

- We often value selfish gain over the integrity of society and culture, but **a lack of integrity will eventually hurt people.**

"A WINGED CREATURE MAY REPORT THE MATTER."

V20 encourages us to be conscious of our thoughts and to not "curse a rich person even in [our] bedroom." This means **our private actions are known by God and will eventually be known by everyone else.**

- This is why the Bible says to **capture thoughts (2Cor. 10:5)** and let God **tame the tongue (Js. 3:8).**

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

- Have we been mindful about what influences us? Have we let "flies" get dangerously close to the truly important things in our lives?
- **Do we realize how deep a little sin gets?** Sin has an insatiable appetite and Satan isn't satisfied until we are destroyed.
- Do we use our backgrounds as an excuse to not be what God wants us to be? **Do we think the Spirit can overcome our deficiencies and pasts?**
- Do busyness and distractions prohibit us from spiritually and mentally preparing for life's hurdles?
- Does our private life resemble our public one?
- Are we what we claim to be? Do we think that our secret actions somehow escape the eyes of God? **Do we realize that all things come out eventually?**
- We will miss yet another opportunity to come clean and change our course?

GOD IS NOT LOOKING FOR PERFECTION, BUT FOR US TO BE HONEST AND WILLING TO GO THROUGH THE PROCESS TO BE MORE LIKE HIM. ISN'T ANY OTHER WAY FOOLISH?