

# Quiet Humility of Wisdom

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Preacher: Andrew Rim

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everyone. How are you guys doing? Like Ed had mentioned, Sean and I, we had traveled down to Pennsylvania this weekend to attend our regional assembly of elders, and it was really such an encouraging time to meet up with other pastors in our region, to be encouraged by them, to hear how God is working in all the churches along Sovereign Grace in the Northeast. And so coming back really encouraged by that. Also really tired a little, but we'll make it through.

It's my joy and pleasure to be able to bring God's word to us this morning. If you have your Bibles, if you would please turn to Ecclesiastes chapter 9, verse 13. If you don't have a Bible, please raise your hand, and one of our church members or ministry volunteers will be able to pass one over to you for you to keep as a gift. Our passage this morning, again, comes from Ecclesiastes chapter 9, verse 13, to all of chapter 10.

Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word. Heavenly Father, we are truly thankful that you give us the opportunity to gather as the body of Christ every Sunday morning. Lord, we are so grateful for your word, scripture, which aids us in encouraging one another, in rebuking one another, in teaching and admonishing us, and filling us with hope of the gospel, Lord. We thank you so much for your son, Jesus, who died on the cross for our sins. And we thank you so much that you give us so much great wisdom through your word. Lord, we confess that we are people who succumb time and time again to the follies and foolishness of this world.

We ask, Lord, that you fill us with wisdom that can only come from you, and help us to take hold of this wisdom that is Jesus, Lord, this morning and for evermore. We thank you so much, Lord. We love you, and we pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen. If you're willing and able, would you please stand for the reading of God's holy and authoritative word? Ecclesiastes chapter 9, verse 13 to chapter 10, verse 20.

I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me. There was a little city with a few men in it, and a great king came against it and besieged it, building great siege works against it. But there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city.

[ 3 : 14 ] Yet no one remembered that poor man. But I say that wisdom is better than might, though the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heard. The words of the wise, heard and quiet, are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good. Dead flies makes the perfumer's ointment give off a stench, so little folly outweighs wisdom and honor. A wise man's heart inclines him to the right, but a fool's heart to the left.

Even when the fool walks on the road, he lacks sense, and he says to everyone that he is a fool. If the anger of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your place, for calmness will lay great offenses to rest. There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as if as it were an error proceeding from the ruler. Folly is set in many high places, and the rich sit in the low place. I have seen slaves on horses and princes walking on the ground like slaves. He who digs a pit will fall into it, and a serpent will bite him who breaks through a wall. He who quarries stones is hurt by them, and he who splits logs is endangered by them. If the iron is blunt and one does not sharpen the edge, he must use more strength. But wisdom helps one to succeed. If the serpent bites before it is charmed, there is no advantage to the charmer. The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is evil madness. A fool multiplies words, though no man knows what is to be, and who can tell him what will be after him. The toil of a fool wearies him, for he does not know the way to the city. Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child and your princes feast in the morning. Happy are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobility, and your princes feast at the proper time for strength and not for drunkenness.

Through sloth the roof sinks in, and through indolence the house leaks. Bread is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life, and money answers everything. Even in your thoughts do not curse the king, nor in your bedroom curse the rich, for a bird of the air will carry your voice, or some winged creature tell the matter. This is God's holy and authoritative word. You may be seated.

There are proverbs, wise sayings, and folk wisdoms that are used in our world, in our society, for very specific occasions and situations. What's interesting, however, is how many of these sayings tend to contradict each other when put next to one another? Let me give a few examples to this.

There's the saying, the early bird gets the worm. It means that it's good to seize your opportunities as soon as you can. But then there's also the saying, haste makes waste, meaning a hurried life makes for more inefficiency. There's the saying, absence makes the heart grow fonder.

[ 6 : 45 ] You pine after the things and people missing from your life. But then there's also the saying, out of sight, out of mind. There's the saying, many hands make light work. The more help that you have, the easier the job will be. But then there's also the saying, too many cooks spoil the broth.

The more help that you have, the worse the end result of the job will be. And there's another saying that says, when you pay attention to detail, the big picture will take care of itself. When you're focused on all the minute details that form the entire big idea, they say that eventually the big idea will form itself. But then there's also this Chinese proverb that says, when the wise man points to the moon, the fool stares at the finger. It's not good to be detail-oriented in this case, or else you'll lose sight of the main idea, the main point.

Obviously, common sense will lead us to utilize different proverbs or different scenarios. And there's certainly a moderate middle ground in between some of these proverbs. It's good to seize opportunities as soon as you can, but it's also good to step back and consider whether that opportunity is worth the risk. Or there are instances where having a lot of help makes a job a lot easier, like setting up and tearing down our church equipment for Sunday service.

Please join our support ministry. But there are also instances where too many opinions in a single project will result in strife, division, and a haphazardly completed job, like a class poster project. We've all had one of those, right?

The point of sharing all of these conflicting proverbs is to show how fickle life and life circumstances can be. At some point in someone's life, their circumstance made them come up with this life wisdom that the early bird gets the worm. But the chances are that another person is like, oh, that sounds like a good wisdom, and tries to apply it into their own life. And they realize instead that haste makes waste. The irony of these folk proverbs and wise sayings to live by in this world is that they shed light all the more on how transient worldly wisdom can be. Because everything in this life is up to time and chance. It's futility, it's vanity, hevel, a striving after wind, breath, to rely fully on the wisdom of this world to sustain us, to grant us success, and to give meaning to our lives.

[ 9 : 29 ] Church, earthly wisdom is not going to save our souls. And so this is our main idea for our passage this morning. Knowing that the wisdom of this world is fleeting, trust in the God-given humble wisdom that is Jesus Christ. I'm going to touch on three points this morning. The value of wisdom, the fragility of wisdom, and Christ, our greater wisdom.

First, the value of wisdom. Right before our passage in Ecclesiastes chapter 9, verse 11 and 12, the preacher observes the futility of life, and the futility of trying to take control of life.

It's like trying to chase after wind or breath, hevel. Like fish that are caught in a fishing net, or birds that are caught in a snare, we humans, whether we're wise or we're foolish, will all succumb to time and chance. There is no set formula in this life. The fast will not always win the race. The strong won't always win the battle. The wise won't always bring bread to the table, nor will the intelligence always gain riches. Everything in this life is up to time and chance.

And so it's a vanity for us to try to take control of life. In chapter 9, verse 13, our passage this morning, the preacher, he brings forth another example of the uncertain circumstances of life. With the story of a little city that was besieged by a great king.

The invading king built powerful siege works, forts, catapults, all sorts of weapons that can destroy the walls of the city in order to capture this small city. But the king's plans are thwarted by the wisdom of a poor, wise man. The city was preserved thanks to the wisdom of this poor man.

[ 11 : 27 ] We'd expect this man to be commended and commemorated for saving the city, and yet the poor, wise man was forgotten. And he became irrelevant in his words and wisdom to others.

Verse 15, yet no one remembered that poor man. He doesn't get the reward that we expect him to receive. And instead, his wisdom is despised and his words are not heard. Church, life circumstances can and will go against our expectations because everything is up to time and chance. There is no perfect formula to life. C'est la vie. That's just how it is.

But this isn't to say that wisdom has no place in this life. That wisdom is pointless to pursue, that we should instead settle for a life of folly. The preacher, he makes the point to emphasize the value of wisdom, even amidst the vanity, the hevel of life.

As a note, the wisdom that the preacher is referring to throughout this passage is earthly wisdom. This is the ability to make good decisions and judgments based on the knowledge that you have in order to be successful in life, in order to get through life. This differs from godly wisdom, which is focused on the moral characteristics of fearing the Lord and obeying his commands, in order to give God the maximal glory. Earthly wisdom and godly wisdom can coincide.

Proverbs chapter 14, verse 29 says, whoever is slow to anger has great understanding. This is godly wisdom, but it's also very practical wisdom in this world. If we're slow to anger, if we're able to slow down and ask more questions and not be instantly enraged at what people say or do to us, there's a lot more wisdom in doing that than immediately exploding on anyone.

[ 13 : 27 ] But the key difference between earthly wisdom and godly wisdom is our end goal. Is it to be more successful? Is it to be better in this life? Or is it to give God the glory and to live a life that is pleasing to him?

And so the preacher in this passage is seeing the great value of exercising earthly wisdom as opposed to following after earthly folly and foolishness.

The preacher continues in verse 16, Even though the speaker of wisdom will be forgotten, wisdom itself will prevail over might.

When wise words are spoken to those who quietly listen and heed the words, it's far better than a mighty ruler who loudly and recklessly speaks into an echo chamber of fools.

These fools who, like parrots, will only repeat back what he says, whether he's right or wrong. Though wisdom is presented in this scenario in a very humble circumstance, it has great impact and value over displays of strength and might.

[ 14 : 45 ] The preacher values the quiet humility of wisdom over the boisterous pride of might. Even in our context today, our world still relishes wisdom over might.

We relish those stories of the underdog who uses their wits and their wisdom, their cleverness to overcome the odds against a larger or mightier foe. Let me give a modern, maybe not so modern, a kind of modern example of this.

In the movie Star Wars Episode 5, The Empire Strikes Back. Wow, that is not modern. Star Wars Episode 5, The Empire Strikes Back.

Darth Vader and Emperor Palpatine, the Empire, they sent out these giant four-legged tanks of destruction called AT-ATs. And they called on these AT-ATs to attack and destroy the rebel base.

And so to defend their base, Luke Skywalker and the rebel alliance, they flew out these ships about 20 times smaller than these AT-ATs. They literally looked like little ants compared to these giant tanks. And they used their wits to circle about the AT-ATs with cables in order to wrap the tank's legs and trip it.

[ 16 : 02 ] And so that it trips over, it falls over, and it explodes. The rebels' clever use of their humble vehicles was enough to triumph over the Empire's behemoths of destruction, the Empire's siege works.

That's an example of earthly wisdom. Another example, in Judges chapter 7, Gideon, he follows God's instructions and reduced his army of 32,000 to a mere 300 men.

These 300 men, they snuck onto the enemy Midianite territory in the middle of the night, and they suddenly blew their trumpets and smashed their jars to alarm and confuse the Midianites. And the Midianites, they fled from their camp, abandoning their stations.

Gideon and his humble band of 300 men defeated an army of 135,000 because the Israelites trusted in God and the wisdom that he gave them.

The wisdom of the Lord manifested in the humble 300-man army of Gideon prevailed over the massive might of the Midianites. And so the preacher says, Wisdom is better than might, even when the words of wisdom may be despised, not heard, or small.

[ 17 : 14 ] Jumping ahead to chapter 10, the preacher again emphasizes the value of wisdom with a series of examples. In verses 2 and 3, the preacher points out that while a wise man's heart inclines him to the right, a fool's heart will go to the left, where the right stands for righteousness and the left stands for wickedness.

The fool's heart will veer him to the left over and over again to the point that when he walks on the road, his leftward inclination is going to be a clear indication to everyone that he is a fool.

Whether he's verbally communicating that himself or not, whether he's proclaiming to everyone, I'm a fool or not, he doesn't even have to say that. The way he just keeps leaning over to the left, the path of destruction, will indicate to everyone else, oh, this guy is a fool.

His very action speaks for himself. Jumping to chapter 10, verse 10, the preacher concludes that wisdom would teach a man to sharpen his iron blade in order to maximize efficiency in cutting or chopping things.

We see that wisdom would teach a snake charmer to make sure that the snake is indeed charmed, else the serpent may bite the charmer. A snake charmer who forgets to charm his snake may want to wisely consider a career change.

[ 18 : 36 ] And finally, the preacher observes in verses 12 and 13 that while the words of a wise man's mouth gain him favor, the lips of a fool lead to his own destruction.

From start to end, the words of a fool's mouth are of nonsense and evil madness, wicked delusion, and he does nothing but spout out more foolishness out of his own ignorance.

A fool multiplies words, verse 14, a fool multiplies words, though no man knows what is to be and who can tell him what will be after him. The fool continues to blabber and yap and perhaps even talks about the future, about his own grand schemes, his plans and aspirations.

But here we have the preacher saying, no man knows what is to be and who can tell him what will be after him. No one knows what's going to happen in the future.

And so we can't say with absolute certainty what is in store for us ahead. It would be considered foolish to do that. We have many church members at Trinity who have big dreams and goals for their future.

[ 19 : 56 ] Some aspire to become aerospace engineers. Others want to go work in the highest political sectors of the United States. We have aspiring dentists, nuclear physicists, PhD candidates, and many more who love to talk about what they're striving toward in the future.

What sets many of our brothers and sisters apart from the fool in verse 14, however, is that they don't multiply their words. They don't double down and say with certainty, I know for sure, I swear, I will become that dentist.

I will gain that position in this political sector. I will solve all of nuclear physics. Or may lightning strike me down. While those with wisdom will share their aspirations and their dreams, while remaining humble amidst the unknowability and uncertainty of life, the fool will speak as if he knows for sure the future outcome of his life.

Church, we're really blessed with intelligent and talented folks in our church. And that's all the more reason we need to be humble in the face of the unknown of the future. It's wise to speak in humility even about our own hopes and dreams and goals.

Proverbs chapter 21 verse 1 says, Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring. No one knows what the future will bring, whether that's a year from now, whether that's a week from now, or even within the next 30 minutes.

[ 21 : 32 ] Our church, we're like unable to figure out what we're going to have for lunch after service. We don't know what's going to happen in the future. It would be wiser to speak, to not speak so surely about our future plans, knowing that we don't have absolute security and control of our future.

Nevertheless, the fool speaks of things that he doesn't know about, the things that he doesn't even have security about. And as a result, he bumbles about, not even sure about how to get to his goal, to his destination, even to a city, which is supposed to be his destination that the preacher speaks of in verse 15.

Wisdom has value. And the preacher shows that there's great merit to pursuing wisdom and being wise in this life. Wisdom helps to preserve us, keep us alive.

Applying wisdom helps us to succeed in our work and our toil. Wisdom helps us not to boast and to speak instead out of thoughtfulness and humility. And wisdom helps to gain favor from those around us because they find what we say to be trustworthy and helpful.

God gives us the common grace, the common grace gift of earthly wisdom in this life, knowing that it's a blessing that allows for humans to flourish in this world.

[ 23 : 03 ] Even today, this wisdom is of good value to our own lives rather than living recklessly, recklessly living out our lives without prudence. It's considered wise to set daily schedules and boundaries for your health, that you sleep at a reasonable hour, that you eat a healthy diet, that you exercise regularly so that you overall feel good.

It's considered wise to set aside money for a rainy day in case accidents or hard times fall upon us. It's considered wise to practice a certain skill set in advance so that you're comfortable with it when your next project, your next performance, your next competition approaches.

Practice makes perfect. There's value in wisdom, and so there is value in pursuing wisdom in our lives in this world. However, wisdom is not the panacea to all of life's problems.

It's not going to solve everything in this life. Wisdom, too, will fail in this life of vanity because we live in a fallen world. Wisdom in this life still has its limitations and shortcomings.

While it offers great benefits to those who seek it in life, wisdom is also very fragile. The preacher first makes this observation in the final verse of chapter 9, verse 18.

[ 24 : 32 ] Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner, one sinner, destroys much good. Wisdom is fragile because it's easily overshadowed by folly.

When a sinner commits a foolish act, wisdom goes flying out the window, and what is meant for good becomes swiftly ruined. The preacher makes a comparison of this fact at the start of chapter 10, verse 1.

Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench. So a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor. When flies smell the sweet scent of perfume, they fly towards the jar, they land in its oil only to get stuck and trapped, and they die, and they begin to rot.

Such a tiny thing like a fly can ruin an entire jar of that sweet, aromatic perfume instead with a foul stench. Folly can easily ruin wisdom.

I remember when I was in second grade, our teacher promised my class of 20 kids a pizza party, a pizza and movie party on Friday if we behaved well throughout the week.

[ 25 : 50 ] We were like saints Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. Our behavior was so good that even other teachers from other classes were complimenting us, being like, oh, these kids are so well behaved.

But then, during a fateful Thursday fire drill exercise, our class got a little too goofy. We got a little too talkative when we should have been quiet and attentive, and we were reprimanded.

Our teacher was greatly disappointed, and she canceled our pizza party. No pizza, no movies. I'm pretty sure it was High School Musical when it first came out. No High School Musical.

I'm not mad about that. But we would have to try to earn that good thing later. In that one moment, a little bit of childish tomfoolery completely overshadowed all of our hard work to behave well, and our chance for a fun Friday, a good thing, was ruined.

Wisdom is fragile because a little folly outweighs wisdom. Just as it's quicker to destroy something than it is to build it, it's easier to ruin a good thing with folly than to build it up with wisdom.

- [ 27 : 09 ] Wisdom is also fragile because of the vanity and the futility of life in this fallen world. As the preacher had said earlier, there is vanity in life, and there's futility in trying to take control of life because everything is up to time and chance.

Just because you plug in A doesn't mean you will always generate B as a result. There is no formula that will give us the exact life circumstances, and wisdom is no exception to this.

There will be moments when wisdom is sought out and exercised and will still encounter unexpected circumstances, disappointments. The preacher seems to be cognizant of this fact as well based on his observations of a wrongdoing ruler in chapter 10, verse 4.

The preacher, he first exercises a word of caution and wisdom telling us to appease an angry ruler with calmness in order to lay offenses to rest.

The preacher sheds light on why he gives this advice of wisdom in verse 5. He's seen an evil under the sun as it were an error proceeding from the ruler.

- [ 28 : 29 ] The ruler has done something wicked that has resulted in error, and his offenses have revealed the waywardness of wisdom in a fallen society. under that king's rule.

The preacher observes in verse 6 that folly is set in high places and the rich sit in the low place. The rich here are considered the wise as they've gained wealth through their wisdom.

And so we'd expect that the wise and the rich would be able to sit in the high places while the fools sit in the low places. But in this fallen and vain society, the rules are reversed and what we expect is all backwards.

We'd expect princes to be on horses while the slaves walked on the ground guiding those horses. But here again, we have the rules reversed.

The princes walk on the ground while the slaves ride the horses. Our traditional wisdom has gone out the window because of the vanity and futility of life in this broken world.

- [ 29 : 32 ] all the more exacerbated by the ruler's evil errors. This is the reality that we live in today as well. There are rulers, there are principalities of evil in this world that have turned wisdom that is supposed to be good upside down, inside out, in a way that doesn't make sense for us.

We expect wisdom to bring us good, but there are so many instances where instead the folly of this world takes over and we're instead met with negative circumstances, disappointments, hurt in our lives.

The preacher gives us four more instances in which he has seen those circumstances not go as expected as a result of the unknowability and the uncertainty of life and wisdom.

Verses eight and nine, we see that there are four men who are doing their regular day-to-day jobs. one man who's digging pits, presumably for hunting traps, one man who breaks down walls, probably for construction, another man who queries stones, also for building, and one man who splits logs for wood.

What each man does should be nothing out of the ordinary as they're simply performing their usual duties in life. But what we see next is an ironic twist to their life circumstances where folly takes a hold of their wisdom, of their skill, and their jobs.

- [ 31 : 06 ] The man who digs a pit is going to fall into his own pit. The man who breaks through a wall will be bitten by a snake that's hiding in the wall. The man who quarries stones will injure himself with his own stone, and the man who splits wood will be endangered by his own logs.

These scenarios feel very much like some sort of Looney Tunes, Tom and Jerry sort of slapstick comedy. Just like dynamite blows up in Wally Coyote's face, or just like Tom accidentally shaving his own tail, the schemes of man fall into circumstances of folly, ridiculousness.

Not necessarily because people have done wrong, but because random and uncertain things happen in this fallen world. Life, and the control of life is vanity and futility, and fully trusting in wisdom in this vain and futile world will lead us to destruction as well, for even wisdom will fail.

Chapter 10 ends by once again reflecting on the ruler. From verse 16, the preacher points out how valuable it is to have a mature and a wise ruler.

A ruler who feasts and drinks at the appropriate time for strength and not for the sake of drunkenness. A foolhardy and immature king like a child will laze around and not care for his kingdom to the point that the roof sinks in and the house leaks.

[ 32 : 41 ] To the foolish king, bread and wine are meant solely for pleasure and not for energy to exercise great wisdom in his rule. And money is simply a means to have more access to that pleasure.

The preacher laments of the folly that this king indulges in when there's so much value and opportunity for wisdom to bring the kingdom back into order.

And yet, the preacher still advises not to criticize or curse the ruler, the king, and to instead offer calm silence lest any criticism reach the king's ears.

Once again, there is vanity in valuing wisdom because bringing up what is considered to be wise will only enrage the king and cause even more folly and strife.

Church, while wisdom has great value, it's also very fragile because we live in this broken and folly-filled world.

[ 33 : 48 ] Nothing is certain in this life and even our efforts to be wise won't always bring us the positive results that we want. The reality that wisdom is fragile can be very discouraging for many of us.

We live in a community in East Cambridge and greater Boston where we really take pride in our wisdom, in our intellect, in our intelligence. And so to hear that moments when we apply wisdom, moments where we apply our wits and our intelligence, it will fail us can be deeply discouraging.

No matter how much we try to pursue wisdom and exercise wisdom in our lives, we can't entirely trust in wisdom to consistently come through for our benefit.

Wisdom will fail. And that's because there's sin in this world and sin brings forth folly, disaster, and unforeseen hardships. Whether that's a result of our own error or not, this is because we who pursue wisdom are also sinful.

We may think we are exercising good wisdom, but the heart is deceitful above all things. We are broken and sinful people operating in a broken and sinful world.

[ 35 : 11 ] And so even our best of intentions can lead to folly and destruction. There are probably many of us here who have experienced the failure of wisdom and the folly of this world in disappointing ways, deeply disappointing ways.

You may have taken all the necessary measures to be qualified for a job or an academic program only for your application to be utterly, brutally rejected.

You've saved up your money for years and years wanting to save for a good thing like a home, a car, only to have to spend it all in order to make repairs for a sudden accident in life.



You've spent so much time trying to make sure that you're healthy and you're well only to be diagnosed with an illness or unforeseen condition. Or you've worked so hard to try to build your community, your friendships, and your relationships only to suddenly be relocated to another city or state or nation.

There are so many unexpected and difficult misfortunes and disappointments in life that are worth grieving over. And these things will show us that the wisdom of this world will fail us in innumerable ways.

[ 36 : 35 ] But while the wisdom of this world is fleeting, the wisdom of our God is not. God's wisdom will never fail those who trust in him.

The apostle Paul writes in Romans chapter 8, verse 28, we know that for those who love God all things work together for good. For those who are called according to his purpose.

God is working all things for our good. Even the things that seem like folly, foolishness to us. Though we may not understand how God is using our hardships or the foolish things of the world for our good, we're called to trust in him and his word, which clearly says that he will work for our good, for his purpose and his glory.

While we can't trust in our own wisdom to sustain us in this world, we can submit to and trust in God's word and his wisdom, which will carry us and sustain us in joy and in hope until the ends of our days.

even when the folly of this world seems overwhelmingly perplexing and discouraging, godly wisdom teaches us to trust in God's redemptive work of a better future.

[ 38 : 02 ] Though we may not know the future of our lives, though we may not know what happens a year from now, a week from now, 30 minutes from now, we continue to hope in God's redemptive work in our lives.

That one day, all the folly and evil of this world will be undone and God's goodness will pervade across all the world. God's wisdom will pervade across all the world and those who believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ will be in eternal fellowship with him forever.

We have assurance of God's perfect wisdom and his sovereignty over us through the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of his son, Jesus. We had read this as our assurance of pardon earlier, but Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1, verse 18 to 25, for the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God, for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

For since in the wisdom of God the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and Christ the wisdom of God.

[ 39 : 54 ] For the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Christ is the power of God and Christ is the wisdom of God and Christ displays the power of God and the wisdom of God by dying on the cross for our sins.

Talk about something so unfathomable, so wondrous, so unimaginable that God would send his only son to die for us. How can we fathom Jesus dying for us?

We're people who can't even fathom when others do favors for us. We're people who can't even fathom when others offer to buy a meal for us. We say, oh, why are you doing this? You don't need to do this.

I don't deserve this. But this Jesus, the son of the living God, willingly gave his life for our sins by dying the most humiliating death on the cross so that we sinful beings can be in right relationship with God so that we can behold his glorious power and wisdom and share an eternal life with him.

To this foolish world full of folly, they see the gospel as folly. I remember when I first encountered the love of God.

[ 41 : 30 ] in high school and I just began to fathom the gravity of Jesus dying for my sins. I was a mess.

Weeping at my bed, I asked God, why? Why would you die for me? It's so ridiculous that such a big God would die for such a small being like me.

Why have you chosen me? I don't deserve this. You didn't have to do this. To our foolish world's understanding of wisdom, this is the most reckless, nonsensical, unwise thing that God would do for us.

Paul even says so in 1 Corinthians 1. The word of the cross, the gospel, is folly to those who are perishing. the difference for us believers, however, is this.

We recognize and accept the miraculous salvation that we've received from Jesus on the cross as a gift of grace. Yes, we don't deserve this salvation.

[ 42 : 46 ] Yes, the salvation that we receive through Jesus' sacrifice does not make sense. Why would such a holy and mighty God give his son for us?

It doesn't make sense. But God, being infinitely gracious and loving toward us, gave us his only son, Jesus, as the atonement for our sins, to give us the opportunity to accept this gracious gift of salvation, to be in right and eternal relationship with him.

Jesus, who is the great word, the logos of God, and the wisdom of God, became our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption, so that putting our faith in him will be the greatest wisdom we could ever receive.

Through the cross and the resurrection, Jesus is magnified as the power and the wisdom of God. And when Jesus comes again, he'll bring to completion the good work that he began in us.

And we'll be able to see clearer than ever and understand better than ever God's infinite wisdom in our lives manifested through his son, Jesus.

[ 44 : 00 ] Church, earthly wisdom will bring some level of benefit and success to our lives in this life and in this world, but it's also going to surely fail us and disappoint us sooner than later.

Earthly wisdom will not be what saves us, for that's what only godly wisdom, the logos, the wisdom that is Jesus can do. And so amidst the fragility, the futility of earthly wisdom, let us trust in God and his eternal word, who is Jesus Christ, our greater and more perfect wisdom.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, we confess that time and time again, we're just so enamored by the wisdom of this world, which is actually foolish folly, Lord.

Lord, we confess that we often try to take our life into our own hands, that we try to take control, that we try to trust fully in our own wisdom, the wisdom of this world, to make much of our own lives.

Lord, we confess that that is idolatry. Because if we don't trust in you, we don't put you in the first place, Lord. Lord, help us to be a church.

[ 45 : 37 ] Help us to be a people who look to Christ as our greater wisdom. Lord, help us to be a people when we're faced with the folly, the foolishness, the hardships, and the disappointments of this life.

Help us to look to you when our wisdom disappoints us and fails us, knowing that you are our greater wisdom, that you are our perfect wisdom manifest in your son, Jesus.

Thank you for being our greater wisdom and filling us with hope of a greater future because you are our wisdom. You are our eternal word, Lord.

We thank you, Lord. We love you, and we pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.