

Get Smart for Life; The Other Side of “Smart”

Get Smart for life, we are having this series because when you consider the world around you, we want you to live and smart in these unprecedented times! **Last week I asked you to consider a big question! Do you remember what it was?**

What is the wise thing to do? If you are a wise person, “Considering your past experiences, your current circumstances and your future dreams and aspirations, what is the wise thing for you to do?”

I asked you to do this because I believe that you owe it to yourself to at least consider the answer! That’s what I’m hoping for – each of us to be mindful or self-aware of how wise we are living! You see, **just asking the question... and considering the possible answer... will lead you to a whole series of thoughts!**

You might even find yourself thinking – “OK, I know the wise thing to do... BUT I still don’t wanna do it!” That’s OK! Why? Because it’s the first step in being mindful and getting smarter in life!

In fact, if you are honest with yourself, and admit that you can see the wise thing to do, but don’t wanna do it – that just told you something about yourself! WHAT?

- **You don’t care about what is best for you!** You don’t have your own best interests in mind. And if that is true, **you really ought to know** that!
- And by realizing that you don’t have your own best interest in mind... who will? Just think about that for a moment!

Last week, I asked you to ask yourself – **what’s the wise thing to do...** not look for an answer, just ask yourself the question. **And just getting in the habit** of asking yourself that question – day by day, hour by hour – decision by decision!

There was one person in the Bible who we don’t have to wonder if he was wise! In fact, it was said that he was the wisest man who ever lived; and God spoke through this man and used him to write 3 books of the Old Testament

- The Book of Proverbs, the Book of Ecclesiastes, and the song of songs

Who am I talking about? King Solomon!

In Proverbs, King Solomon talked about 4 different kinds of people. The most important – is the WISE person! A wise person will look at the past, the present, and the future... and considering all three... then make a decision!

But Solomon didn't stop there! In our first scripture from Proverbs, Solomon points out 3 other types of personalities or categories of people that are the opposite of "Get Smart!" **Let's start with Proverbs 1:20-22:**

*"Out in the open **wisdom** calls aloud, she raises her voice in the public square; on top of the wall she cries out, at the city gate she makes her speech: 'How long will you who are **simple** love your simple ways? How long will **mockers** delight in mockery and **fools** hate knowledge?'"*

Did you hear the 3 alternatives to wisdom that Solomon pointed out?

There is the Simple – The Fool – and the Mocker.

It's important to see these alternatives to wisdom in the Book of Proverbs, because: **"When we walk away from wisdom... We walk toward something else!"**

This is also considered "Intentional Living!" Because when we don't intentionally choose wisdom, we unwittingly choose other things!

So, let's "Get Smart for Life" by looking at "The Other Side of Smart!"
Because to understand what wisdom looks like,
We need to acknowledge what wisdom clearly doesn't look like!

Now for the disclaimer! You might may get a little frustrated or angry today! That's OK, because you owe it to yourself to hear about the alternatives to wisdom, because if you don't look out for your own best interests... who will?

1)The first alternative to wisdom - The Simple

The reason some don't choose wisdom or why they are unwise, isn't because they are not against wisdom! **The truth is, they just haven't lived long enough to know better!** It's about maturity!

A simple person isn't bad, they are naïve, they don't have the life experiences to use as a reference to what they are experiencing.

Truth is, in life, we are always going to experience something we never experienced before. That is living! As long as we are breathing, we will always come across something we never experienced before!

A very good example of this is the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Few people, other than a few who lived and cared for people in a 3rd world country have experienced a Pandemic. Even then, no one has ever experienced a Pandemic on a global scale like we are experiencing today!

So everything we do, is an educated presumption! I'm talking about a presumption, not to assume – ever hear what happens when you assume!

- **Now a presumption is a belief on reasonable grounds or probable evidence!** Everything we are doing in response to the Pandemic is based on various models... are they all 100% accurate? No – We really don't know because we have never been through something like this before – in all of our wisdom and knowledge, we are still simple in many ways.

We lack experience! That is neither good or bad – just reality!

Solomon gives a good example in Proverbs 7:9 about a young man convinced that he's heading for a good time. **But as the story unfolds, you can almost hear the theme to jaws.**

You get that creepy feeling something bad is going to happen, and your right, Solomon described him as *“Like an ox going to the slaughter, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life.”* Proverbs 7:22-23

- **Being young can be amazing... being young can also be very dangerous!** Why? Because you are young!

What happens to most young adults when someone a little older tries to warn them of dangers ahead? They say, “I got it, that isn't going to happen! Not me!” But Proverbs shows us - a lot happens in life and it can change in the blink of an eye!

Then you find yourself somewhere you don't want to be!

I'm not getting down on the young, just speaking truth.

I have a sign in my office - straight from Biblical Principle:

A fool never learns, a wise person learns from mistakes, a brilliant person learns from others mistakes!

The point is, you can have the benefits of youth and the benefits of wisdom – all at the same time! The fact that you're simple and naïve or a bit clueless doesn't have to derail your life! **You do not have to learn everything the hard way!**

- **What is the Key? You have to seek wisdom!**

It will not come naturally! You have to learn to pray and ask God! You have to make it a habit and be intentional every time at every opportunity and every choice and ask... **Considering my experience (which may not be to much), considering my current circumstances... considering my future hopes and aspirations... what is the wise choice to make?**

2)The 2nd alternative to wisdom - The Fool

This next alternative to wisdom is different from a simple person because the FOOL knows the choice, he or she is about to make is unwise... They just don't care!

This person knows from experience, they have stepped in it... They just don't give a _____ fill in the blank with whatever word you wisely think would be used! They will also say "This is my business and it's none of your _____ business!"

Solomon gives a word picture that really drives home the point in Proverbs 26:11, ***"As a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly."*** Gross, I know, but Solomon isn't holding anything back! And it is in the Bible!

This is that area in your life where you tell yourself, "I know this is a bad idea... but I'm doing it anyway! And I'm probably going to do it again! Solomon is saying – in that part of your life – you're a fool man! Click a **WOW** if you've been there - done that! I know I have!

Now... while time and learning is the cure for the simple person... it isn't so easy for the fool! **The fool has to learn the hard way! And unfortunately, the cure usually comes as hitting rock bottom** or as a hardship or a wrecked situation.

When a fool hits rock bottom, it is seldom alone! While a fool says "It's my life and I will do what I want!" My time, my money, my **fill in the blank**...

It's usually is followed by, "Besides, I'm not hurting anyone!"

But is that true? Solomon explained in Proverbs 13:20, "*A companion of fools suffers harm.*" Who is the fool's companion? The children or spouse? The relatives or coworkers? The boyfriend, girlfriend or other-friend?

- They suffer the from the fool's wrong choices! The problem with fools... there is always some kind of collateral damage from a fool's wrong choices.
- And the fool generally responds by either saying, "Not my fault or I didn't mean to!" But they still hurt other people!

3)The 3rd alternative to wisdom is – The Mocker

Solomon addressed this in Proverbs 9:7-8, "*Whoever corrects a mocker invites insults; whoever rebukes the wicked incurs abuse. Do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you; rebuke the wise and they will love you.*"

The Mocker... this is a fool on steroids!

The mocker is cynical, critical and sarcastic, condescending and controlling! You always seem feel off balance around them, they like to say that they are only being honest and love telling you what they think - without a filter.

The mocker doesn't care about the difference between right and wrong, wise or foolish, and they always seem to be mocking or scoffing those who are trying to do what is right! They'll always have a reason why they can't or don't - have to do what is right or wise!

They're always working to get the "Gotcha moment" and prove that they are the smartest person in the room. Then they use the supposed knowledge to dominate and manipulate everything around them.

- They also work hard to play the victim – when it's necessary, and they do it so they can control the world or the people around them!

- Something else about the mocker - - you will never win with them! They don't listen! Whatever is driving them: insecurity, arrogant selfishness, or something from their past, they're driven to control every situation they find themselves in.

If you are honest with yourself, you – like me, will see some of our choices fitting into one or more of these not-so-wise categories.

If you did – you have grown in mindfulness and moved up a level in self-awareness!

Maybe even enough to consider taking the step of faith and start allowing the Holy Spirit of God to empower you to “Get Smart for Life” and start asking in every situation and choice, “Considering my past experiences, my current situation and by future dreams and aspirations, what is the wise thing for me to do?”

Prayer: