

Get Smart – 4: The “Other Side of Smart”

Welcome back to our sermon series “Get Smart.” Whether the TV series or the recent movie there was Max... Agent 87 and his faithful assistant Agent 99. Both worked for Control and battled KAOS, Agent 99 was always looking out for Max (Agent 87) and getting him out of trouble.

Agent 99 was always looking out for Max Smart. Kinda like the ways our Moms are always looking out and caring for and loving us!

**Ever notice how wisdom is described in the Book of Proverbs as a woman?
Thank God for our wise mothers!**

This series looks at the question that answers just about everything.

It's the key to help you **Get Smart** and answer every invitation or question or choice, or bring clarity to what you face in life.

What is the question: “WHAT IS THE WISE THING TO DO?”

In our 1st sermon, we broke down “The Question” into 3 parts:

- Considering my past experiences – my experiences are different from yours
- Considering my current circumstances – What is happening in my life right now
- And considering my future dreams and aspirations...
 - **What is the wise thing for me to do?**

You see, you owe it to yourself to ask yourself that question! You really ought to know if you really don't want to do the wise thing in life!

Today we're going to talk about something that likely caused your mom some sleepless nights. We're talking about wisdom and your greatest regret in life!

How many times have you been tempted to do something you know you shouldn't have done, but did it anyways? Isn't it easy to talk yourself into doing something?

Let's think about how that happens:

1) We start with, “Well, it’s not wrong!”

- How often do we think “If nothing is wrong with it, it must be OK.
- **For a Christian**, the abundant life God offers is more than right or wrong
- The abundant life God offers is above living a mediocre life!

- Now if you are not a Christian or still checking Christianity out, that’s ok, but you ought to live above the mediocre, simply OK life!

1. Let’s apply wisdom to your greatest regret in life.

What you will notice in life, my biggest, and I have a hunch your biggest, regret in life, it didn’t just happen! **Bad decisions usually follow a series of unwise decisions.**

- Did you hear that? **“Our bad decisions in life usually follow a series of unwise decisions!”**

Think back to your greatest regret.

- I’ll give you an example. For me, several of my regrets started with the one greatest regret - when I lost my driver’s license street racing. The problem wasn’t my last ticket.
- I remember when my Mom told me not to hang around with those guys. Don’t go with them!
- **She didn’t say “why!” After all, having friends isn’t wrong.**
- Spending time with friends isn’t bad. And you know the old saying, “Don’t judge a book by it’s cover!”
- Although Mom didn’t use the same words, my mom knew it wasn’t wise.

- And I did what most every Teenager did! I argued with my Mom and said, “There’s nothing wrong with...” Hanging out with them, going with them, working with them, confiding with them.
- And then came the most dangerous statement of all... But all my friends are doing it!

- I’ll tell you right now, down deep, I knew... it didn’t “FEEL” right!

- **Why did we do it?** Think about it! It's so easy to talk yourself into something when you know down deep that it doesn't "FEEL" right.

What do we do? We tell ourselves, there's nothing wrong with it, it isn't going to hurt anything. It's not that it's wrong, it just wasn't wise!

- **Most of us end up not being honest to ourselves**, we don't admit that down deep, we know that it doesn't feel right. Everyone else sees it, but we don't want to admit it. **And then we make a series of unwise decisions that led to a very bad decision.**

Let's change it up a bit. Imagine it's your brother or sister, friend or child, niece or nephew. They are making the unwise decisions. How do ya handle it?

You're not trying to be judgmental or critical, but you've been down that road. **Why is this so easy?** Why does this happen to us, our friends and family???

2. Because we like to get as close to the edge as we can without crossing

Be honest, we like to get as close to the edge without crossing it. Don't believe me?

Call Beth up

- How many of you push the speed limit? How fast can you go without getting stopped? 5MPH, 7MPH, 9MPH
- Dieting or counting calories, what's an extra 100 calories. No big deal
- Or following your budget, what's an extra \$50. No big deal
- And your right, in most if not all cases... it's no big deal we like to live on the edge, until your going 20 MPH over the speed limit and you get a ticket.

- **Our culture likes to encourage us to push it, right!** With the little things in life, you can get away with it! I don't encourage it, but culture encourages it.
- **Our culture likes us to push a lot of choices right to the edge without crossing...** but there are somethings in life, if you cross the line - you get into trouble.

There are some lines, when you cross them – it causes extraordinary regret! It also makes life very complicated! You know what I mean, I'm sure you have more than a story or two where that happened in your life.

Before we go too far, don't get too far ahead of me. We have believers and nonbelievers and the undecided with us this morning. So:

Let's start with the most important point! If there's a God who deeply loves you and wants us to call Him a perfect Heavenly Father! And God created you and as the Bible explains - has a future for you and knows your name and cares about you. Then what do you think God would say about getting too close to the edge without crossing it? Do you think God would tell you to go for it? Walk the line?
Be careful!

3. God would say what any good parent would say to their child, Don't go so close, don't do it!

Let me explain, 2000 years ago, in a place called Corinth Greece, there were a bunch of brand new Christians. There are 2 Books or Letters (1 & 2 Corinthians), and they lived in a very pagan society. If you read those 2 letters, there was some pretty wild stuff going on. It was a very worldly group.

YES - they believed Jesus was the Son of God, that He rose from the dead and Jesus was their savior. They were trying to figure out how to be an ex-pagan Christian in a pagan world, a place where prostitution was encouraged at the pagan temple. They were trying to figure it out. Their culture wasn't much different from ours and they were skirting the edge too.

So Paul wrote them a letter, inspired by God, that was very relevant for us! Paul wanted to warn them not to hurt themselves, so he said in 1 Corinthians 6:18, ***"Flee from Sexual Immorality."*** Don't get as close to the line without _____!

Flee – Run as fast and as far as possible!

- This is what every person in a serious relationship wants their partner to do!

- What every mother wants her kids to do
- In fact, this is what every brother or sister wants for their sibling!

We know this is good for those we love! But we not sure it is good for us!

The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:18, “*Flee from Sexual Immorality. All other sins a person commits... now you can define sins any way you want, this is something a person should never do... all other sins a person commits are outside the Body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.*”

Sexual sin is in a category all of its own! Paul explains, “sexual sin is unique.”
Don’t get ahead of me. In my experience, when I talk to someone struggling with great regret and guilt and complex issues they are trying to work through, more often than not... something sexual is involved.

- Apparently, according to Paul, sex isn’t just physical. It affects the Heart and soul, our conscience and relationships!
- Please hear me, Sexual sin is not worse... it’s just different as in how it impacts you. Things sexual stick around longer. Our world, like Corinth 2000 years ago says it’s not a big deal.
- It’s not worse! It’s unforgiveable! Remember Jesus forgave the Samaritan woman at the well and the woman the Jewish Leaders caught in adultery. Jesus offers forgiveness. It’s different in how it impacts us.

Now please, if you hear anything today, hear this...

4. Of all the things most people have a hard time forgiving themselves for, things sexual is the most difficult.

- God forgives! 1 John1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
- But we struggle! We struggle with shame and guilt and have the hardest time forgiving ourselves over things sexual

The issue isn’t forgiveness! The issue is the consequences!

That's why Paul went on to explain in 1 Corinthians 6:20b, "***Therefore honor God with your bodies.***" Would you have more or less regrets in life if you honored God with your Body?

- **Remember, God is for you! Not against you!**
Don't let your worse regret and the series of behaviors or sins that brought you to it, rob you of healthy relationships!
- **God knows, you will never be happier than your relationships!** And nothing complicates a relationship more than sexualizing it. That is why God says run away from it, flee! Because God wants you to have the best life!

Instead of asking how close can I get to the edge, the edge that movies and tv shows and magazines and social media and the internet and the rest of our culture bates us to test and then shames us when we cross it.

- That edge that everyone around us... and even ourselves will say, "There's nothing wrong with it!"

We have to consider our what wise choices we are to make, not unwise, but wise and remember:

- Considering our past experiences
- Our current circumstances
- And our future dreams and aspirations
- What is the wise thing to do?

But first, consider your greatest regret a moment?

What have you been doing with it and the guilt and shame it carries?

- 1) The first step to freeing yourself from it is this, have you asked Jesus into your life? If not, this is just going to be another thing to add onto another already busy life.
- 2) Then ask Jesus to forgive you of those bad decisions and the unwise choices that spurred it on, as well as the regrets you got from them. Remember 1 John 1:9, "***If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.***"
- 3) Then ask Jesus to be the manager of your life, that means to be your Lord.

If you did that, write that in on your Connect card with your US Postal address or email and I have some items to send you. A gift that will help you on your new adventure in life!

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for your word, the Bible that is so practical and life applicable! You word that directs us to flee that which will imprison us and offers us the abundant life you offer! Thank you for warning us, I pray that with your Holy Spirit, you will help us to not learn the hard way. Help us use the wisdom you have given us to use what we have heard this morning! And the courage to choose wisdom! As we pray in Jesus Name! Amen!