

## How We Come to The Lord – Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

- 1) **What is worship? How do we see different views played out in the American church?**

The preacher in Ecclesiastes was an observer of the worship of God's people, and this passage describes what he saw:

**5:1** *Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil. 2 Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few. 3 For a dream comes with much business, and a fool's voice with many words. 4 When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. 5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 6 Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? 7 For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity; but God is the one you must fear.*

The preacher focuses on the sacrifices and vows he sees offered at the house of God. He sees the way these are done as betraying a small view of God and an elevated view of the worshipper.

- 2) **Why is listening to God superior to the offering “sacrifice of fools” or uttering many words before Him? What is fundamentally different about these responses?**
- 3) **It seems that coming to listen or receive from God would be the easy way, but it does not seem to play out that way. Why is striving so often more appealing to us than receiving?**

Vows are voluntary commitments made to good, and whenever they are spoken about it is almost always to warn against the (here, Jesus in Matthew 5:33–37, James in James 5:12).

- 4) **What is it about God and ourselves that should give us the “handle with care” mentality about vows? Or to put it another way, what makes “vows” seem like a good idea to us at times?**

The preacher began by calling us to watch our steps as we come before God, and now he closes by telling God is the one we should fear. We should all fear God, by there are different types of fear.

- 5) **Read Hebrew 4:14-16. How does this jive with the preacher's warning to fear God?**
- 6) **How does the work of Jesus transform the fear of God for those who are in Him?**
- 7) **Does this understanding of who God is and our total dependence on him produce a nonchalant approach to the Christian life?**
- 8) **How do we as a church encourage one another to rightly view ourselves and God?**

Spend time in prayer acknowledging God's greatness and our need of him. In what ways do you need mercy and grace right now as we go before the father?