

We all struggle with time.

I got off the phone, it was a FaceTime call yesterday with my oldest son who's 29, his wife, they just had their first child.

They have a little girl that's a month old.

And it was one of those moments that you, as a dad, have a hard time picturing because

And for those of you that are younger and you still struggle with how your parents look at you, just let me give you a little insight here.

This will help you love your parents better that are older.

Their house is full of pictures of you at two years old, four years old, six years old.

Now, if that's all they have in their house, that's a little creepy.

You need to tell your parents to take some of those down.

But they still have pictures of you at two, four, six, and they have books loaded with your pictures.

Right?

Now, if you came from a family of five kids and you were the last born like me, there's a lot less of you than your older brother, and you're still a little bitter about that, but that's a different subject.

There's a ton of pictures in your house of you small, and they've spent every minute with you at 0, 1, 2, 6, 9, 12, 16, 24, now you're 30.

And so they don't just see you as 30, they have memories of you at 27, 20, 15, 12, right parents?

So when you're looking at your 29 with this firstborn daughter, like all of these weird images are in your head of this 29 year old who couldn't stop eating boogers in church.

That was one of my greatest memories of him.

It's like, man, just stop.

You don't have to eat everything that comes out of your body to stop.

And there he is parenting a little girl now.

And I'm thinking, how's this going to work?

And he's got her dressed in this little dress that my wife gave her that she wore.

So she's thinking all these thoughts, you know.

And it was just crazy just watching them interact for a second.

They were getting ready to go to a wedding.

Later on that night, he FaceTimes us.

And he's laying on this couch at his...

wife's grandmother's house and and it's that moment right like every dad dreams of this moment where you actually get to sleep with your child on your chest you know it's the it's the best right and you kind of want time to stand still in those moments you don't kind of want you just want it to and then she woke up and immediately when she woke up she went from like this please let time stand still to and and and at that moment you want time to do what

Like move really quickly or go back.

You just don't want it to stay where it is.

Go back, go forward.

Small picture, I just want you to hear this.

Like we struggle with time because no matter what it's doing, we're not happy with it.

We either want it to be still, which it won't, or we want it to rewind because we have a little regret about something we just did.

Or we want it to go forward faster because we don't want any more screams or we're, as a dad, longing for that day that he can throw the ball.

So we're kind of hoping time would move forward faster.

And can I just say this to you parents that have youngers?

Listen, do not wish time away.

Like when people tell you, like, time moves quickly with your kids, like, that's old people speak for it, like, slow down a little bit.

But just don't wish time away.

Some of you are at a job right now and you're like, man, I just want to get over being the new person.

You know what's good about being the new person in your job?

You get to ask all sorts of questions you don't get to ask a year later about people and processes.

So in your ignorance, you can ask people all sorts of questions.

It's like the first day of school.

Take advantage of that.

Be inquisitive.

Ask people about themselves.

Ask them about things they like, where they go, what do they do on the weekend.

You're

fishing a little bit to see, you know, where are they spending their time during the weekend?

Do they have

spiritual interests that connect them up with people like this on the weekend?

Are they like biking, hiking?

That's all they do.

And again, just you have some time that God has afforded you to do some things in places and we just struggle with it.

We absolutely want time to turn back.

We want time to go faster.

We want time to stand still.

We want time to come with instructions at times, don't we?

Like tell us how to do this, especially when you bring that thing home for the first time.

Or you get a new friendship, or you get a new relationship, or you step into a new place with new people.

We want time to leave us alone.

Here's a recap of where we were last week as we started in Ephesians 5.

This is verse 16.

We're going to go through a little bit more of this, but last week we looked at this idea, this phrase says, making the best use of the time because the days are evil.

Literally that phrase, make use of the best use of the time, means to redeem time.

Redeem being buy back.

Buy it back for a purpose.

For something that needs to be used.

And we talked about two reasons the Lord commands us to redeem our time.

And this is a command.

It's not a suggestion.

It's not, hey, this will make your life go better.

These are commands from the heart and the voice of the Lord.

And he's got two reasons for this.

First one is ownership.

We talked about this just a minute ago.

Jim said that the breath in your lungs is from God.

Now, for those of us that are in Christ, hear this, that we've confessed Jesus Lord and Savior.

We've been redeemed, bought by Christ's blood, and you're not your own.

This is what 1 Corinthians 6 says.

I love this.

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?

Man, we could just stop, push pause, sit in this and go home.

The stars that got flung into the sky last night by God,

That the stars that some of you haven't seen in like three years because you haven't looked up in the dark in a while.

I want to encourage you to do that somewhere sometime.

Because if you want to get a picture of who you are compared to who God is, you need to go to a dark place where you can look up and just see the cosmos.

Because what you will realize is this.

There is a God.

He is big.

I'm not.

And here's the phenomenal thing about this verse.

The God that made those stars lives inside you.

How crazy is that?

And he lives inside you because he's bought you.

So what it goes on to say here that you're the temple of the Holy Spirit whom you have from God.

You are not your own.

You were bought with a price.

Ownership is the first reason God's saying, I need you to redeem this because I've redeemed you.

And now this time that you have is my time, our time, but it's mine.

I've given it to you.

You're a steward of this body and you are a steward of this time.

The second thing is urgency.

There's an urgency because our days in the middle of all of this time are very limited.

And we get that every once in a while when someone around us we love dies that we think isn't supposed to.

My dad's 95.

He's going to die someday, I hope.

I hope he gets to go see Jesus soon.

I love my dad, but man, the dude's old.

He's 95, and every part of him is ready to go see Jesus, but he's like healthy, and he's like, I don't know what to tell you, man.

I could be around.

You could have to deal with me a couple more years.

And I'm like, please, no.

I love my day.

It was like a mile down the street from me, but I'm like, I believe that where he's going is way better than where he is now.

And he will still tell you after 95 years it has been like that.

And there will be eternity on the other side of this.

This is what the psalmist says.

So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

By the way, it was Moses who wrote this, Psalm 90.

Number our days, meaning not like how many days we actually, because in that Psalm, Moses says, man, we have 70 years, maybe 80 years if we live it right.

Maybe 95, but it's limited.

And that time God has given you is his time.

There's a kingdom that he's brought to this earth.

And now he's called us to join him in that kingdom work.

So he's saying, listen, this is urgent.

What we do with our time matters.

And I want you to hear this this morning as we talk.

This four weeks as we spend together is not about time management.

We're going to be talking about redeeming time.

But this isn't about time management.

Yes.

I believe you're going to learn some really practical things to help you live out stewarding God's time that he's given you.

But more than that, this is about fighting for hearts.

We prayed about that this morning as we were upstairs.

And I just want you to hear this morning.

My desire being here for these four weeks, and Jeff asked me about six months ago, was, Jeff, I will come if you let me fight for hearts together with you and other people in this place.

This is not a conference where we come and sit and learn things together.

Love conferences, but...

But do you know what I mean by the difference in that?

This is a body of Christ, not a workshop where we learn stuff.

And you're gonna learn stuff, but if that stuff doesn't change your heart, what are we doing?

I would rather be outside playing golf, even in this 95 degree weather, but I will fight for hearts in here if you're ready to join me in that.

And the reason we're fighting for hearts is because these aren't our own bodies.

And so we need to be reminded of that in each other, but not just reminded, we need to fight for that because every morning you wake up is a battle of who's going to get worship.

Not just are you going to sing a song on Sunday to God, but who's going to get your life, which means who's going to get your time.

And do you see it as God's time?

And is there an urgency about that?

And fighting for hearts means there's people all around you that are walking in the middle of some rebellion towards this right now, believing this is actually their time.

And they live in your house or their neighbor's next door or it's a parent you care about or it's a friend that you have or a coworker.

There's hearts to be fought for and just right in this room.

So we're going to be doing a lot of praying during the middle of this sermon.

We're going to begin right here.

So let's pray together.

God, would you help us believe that we together today get to fight for hearts?

that your Holy Spirit is the one that ultimately changes hearts.

We don't, but we get to join you in this.



So we're asking you, Lord, help us fight together for the hearts that you've given us, the minds that you've given us, the souls that you've given us.

And this morning, I pray that you do this through your word as we unpack it together.

And we pray this in your name, Jesus.

Amen.

Here are the truths that God has for us today.

This is a little bit of recap and a little bit of truth ahead.

He tells us to redeem time because the time you have is not yours.

It's a gift from our King.

And these are kind of the two things we're going to look at today.

The first one is this.

Outside of Christ, even in Christ, our flesh is foolish.

That's what the Word of God says.

That there's a part of you in Christ that has this old nature, and that old nature is foolish.

We're going to talk about what that means in a minute, but it pretty much means exactly what you think it means.

When you call somebody a fool, that's not a compliment, is it?

And there's a fool that lives in you.

Now there's a new creation in you.

That verse came up on the screen as the announcements were rolling earlier.

You're a new creation.

The gospel changes everything.

You are a new creation, but you're also an old creation.

New creation has access to the wisdom of God, the power of the Holy Spirit that flung those stars into space.

But also your old nature, your flesh is foolish.

There's not a part of it that's not.

So we're going to look at that, that we need God's wisdom.

We're going to steward his time well, because in and of ourselves, we're going to make some foolish decisions.

But secondly, even in the new creation, even God living in us says this about you and I, we are finite.

I do not know everything.

Now, some of us act like we do, right?

Getting that conversation with this person this week that was dogmatic about whatever you were talking about.

It may have been about why, you know, the World Cup is rigging it for Argentina to win.

Who knows?

But I'm kidding.

I'm kidding.

But you get into those kind of conversations with people about soccer, especially when people are like super dogmatic, like they know everything.

And I'm like, man, you're not God.

Messi thinks he's God, but you're not God.

And we have a limited knowledge, don't we?

Even when God gives us his wisdom, we don't know what's going to happen in the next minute.

God does.

That's why sometimes you feel like God's asked me to do this.

You step into it and on the outside it goes all wrong.

Then what do you think?

I must have heard wrong.

And God's will and God's wisdom doesn't mean things are going to go pleasant all the time.

Ask Jesus.

Betrayal

right?

His own people abandoning him, but he was absolutely carrying out the will of God.

So carrying out the will of God in his time and his way doesn't mean it's going to be pleasant.

And you don't evaluate whether you're living in God's will based on how pleasant things are.

So how do we understand this?

This is verse 15 through 17.

We're going to be focusing on verse 17 this morning from Ephesians 5.

Here's the word of the Lord to us this morning.

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but wise.

Give us a heart of wisdom, Lord, just like we read from Psalm 90.

Making the best use of the time, redeeming that time because the days are evil.

Therefore, do not be foolish.

There's the word, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Let's dive into this.

Here's verse 17.

Therefore, do not be foolish.

We're going to come back to that.

But first, let's look at understand what the will of the Lord is.

He says, understand to come to some kind of grasp on what the will of the Lord is in his wisdom.

Be wise, not unwise.

So just want to walk into two things here that are kind of foundational for this.

The Bible, this is what we call the word of God, is filled with what we call the will of God.

And we'll say it this way, this is how theologians say it, the revealed will of God.

So here's a little definition on the screen for you for what the revealed will of God is.

That means God has shown it to us.

It's plain.

In the New Testament, for example, there's 30 commandments about one another.

Love one another, serve one another, forgive one another.

Have compassion for one another.

Those are God's revealed will.

And when we're talking about God's revealed will, we just mean this, that it's really clear in the word that this is God speaking this to us, that it's his will that

And then it's commonly agreed upon by the body of Christ is what God's will is, and it's been agreed upon for a long time.

Now, I say commonly because there are people in the body of Christ that disagree with some of the things that are in God's word.

We may look at them a little bit differently, but the revealed will of God comes from the word of God.

It's clear in here, and it's been agreed upon for a long period of time.

There is a second aspect of God's will we talk about a lot, and some people call this the permissive will of God.

Now, the permissive will of God is all of those things that you and I spend most of our time praying about.

Where do I go to school?

Which job do I take?

Do I move into this house?

Do I move from this city?

Do I start dating this person?

What do I do with this job?

Do I take this promotion?

Do I not take the promotion?

What do I do with this friendship?

How do I love my neighbor?

On and on and on and on and on.

We spend most of our time praying about, and what I mean by God's permissive will is this.

It's not clearly defined in here which job we should take.

Or it's not denied in here.

So in other words, if you're praying about taking a job as a hired assassin that gets paid millions of dollars to kill people, probably that's against God's word, right?

God's word says, hey, do not murder.

If you're praying about being a sex trafficker, and I'm not joking here, that is against God's word.

And you may say, why would you bring that up?

I have people every day as a pastor come up to me and go, hey, I'm praying about dating this guy.

And I'm like, okay, tell me about it.

And I do this.

Tell me about him.

And they're like, oh, he's so sweet.

And I bet he is.

He's handsome.

Oh, I bet he is.

And now let's ask him one question.

Does he love Jesus?

And they're like, well, we're working on that.

And I'm like, stop.

Because the revealed will of God is saying no to a permissive will question that you're asking.

Does that make sense?

So permissive will, we're praying about things like, should I do this?

And it's not denied in here.

Might be affirmed, but here's the crazy thing.

This is what I want you to hear as we walk through this.

We're going to spend a whole lot more time on how we pray about these two things today, but also in the next two weeks.

I don't have an exact number, but 99% of the scripture is about God's revealed will.

Jesus says it this way, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Here's what 66 books written by many different authors agree on coming together in one space.

that Jesus Christ came as the Son of God, fully revealing the person of God and the will of God, and he lived a sinless life.

And then he died a sin-bearing death in our place because we were in rebellion to holy God, a death that we should have died for our rebellion, rose from the dead, and those who by faith confess sin

This, that I am a sinner in rebellion to holy God and I will trust Jesus and his death in my place get to be made right with God so that they can be with God.

That is what 66 books agree upon is the will of God that is expressed all through this book over and over and over.

That is what Jesus says is seeking first the kingdom of God.

Then his righteousness is then how we live in relationship with God and each other.

And Jesus said it this way.

Here's all of the commands and the will of God summed up in one sentence.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself.

That's 99% of the scripture when it's revealing the will of God.

And by the way, we believe that it's not just that God has spoke, but the word says this, that he is speaking.

Hebrews says it this way, this is the living, active voice of God.

We have a struggle believing that because it's paper, but man, when it comes alive in your heart and starts to change your actions, you realize God is speaking.

Now here's the problem with that 99% revealed will, 1% permissive will that the Bible speaks to.

What do you spend most of your time praying about?

The 1%.

Which do you think God's more concerned about?

If 99% of his revealed will is revealed will, what do you think he's more concerned about?

How we forgive one another.

How we love one another.

How we serve one another.

How we pursue one another.

All the one another's.

And that's just 30 examples.

And I'm not saying we don't pray about the permissive will things.

God says, please ask.

But what we're gonna learn today is this.

If you spend the majority of your time praying about permissive will things and not seeking the Lord's direction and will on the revealed will things, like how do I love my neighbor?

Because loving your neighbor is not something you pray about.

How you love them, yes, you need to pray about.

And maybe it's not even like, should I?

It's like, Lord, I don't want to.

She's unlovely.

And the Lord's like, I understand, so are you.

Amen.

And I loved you.

And I love you.

So let's have a conversation about this.

I was talking to a brother right here.



I'm in the car.

I'm learning to have conversations with the Lord like this.

Lord, I know you tell me to love my neighbor.

My neighbor's unlovely.

What do I do?

And the Lord's like, okay, let's talk about this.

It's prayer.

Prayer isn't me having to ride out and bow my head.

I mean, prayer is just having a conversation with the Lord.

And there are times when it is me on my face.

There's other times when it's me in the car.

And is me talking to the Lord hopefully mostly about his revealed will?

Yes, I pray about those permissive will things all the time.

God wants us to understand both.

Do you hear this in this passage?

Don't be foolish.

Understand what the will of the Lord is.

As you read the Bible, you're going to learn a lot about God's revealed will.

And it's going to help you with his permissive will.

But he's saying understand it from a spirit of wisdom, not foolishness.

So let's walk back to the foolishness thing because this is super important.

Let me say this.

Understanding the will of the Lord

God requires godly wisdom and turning from foolish wisdom.

So hear this as we walk into this next piece on foolishness, that if we're going to understand what the will of the Lord is, how we walk in this revealed will and permissive will, it requires godly wisdom and turning from foolish wisdom.

What do I mean by that?

Let's look at this again.

Verse 15 says, He's telling us, if you're going to walk carefully, stewarding the time that God's given you, redeeming that time, you have to walk not as unwise, but wise.

Because the days are evil.

There's an urgency here, right?

And this isn't yours.

So then he gets really specific.

Don't be foolish.

Don't be foolish.

So we're ready to fight for each other's hearts.

This is where it gets really specific as we start fighting.

We're going to pray for one another right now again specifically about the foolishness because I believe this.

All of us live in a little bit of foolishness.

Some of us are living in a lot of it right now.

But all of us are there, me included.

I'm going to tell you where mine is.

I'm not going to ask you to tell me where yours is.

I just know it's there.

So we're going to fight for each other's hearts.

Let's pray for it right now.

God, would you reveal the foolishness in our hearts right now that we are not just listening to, but we are giving into?

Open our eyes to see these things even right now.

We pray this in your name, Jesus.

Amen.

This is what James, the book of James, Holy Spirit writes through James in verse 13 about wisdom and foolishness.

This is James chapter 3, verse 13.

13.

Well, before we get there, hold on.

This idea of do not be foolish means this.

Don't walk apart from God's wisdom, but walk in it.

Foolishness is walking apart from God's wisdom.

This is how James unpacks this for us.

Who is wise and understanding among you?

Exactly what Ephesians is telling us.

Be wise and understanding.

This is what that wisdom looks like.

By his good conduct, let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.

You know what the word meekness means?

We don't use that word in our culture a lot.

Meekness means this.

Have you ever seen a horse that's wild, like a wild stallion?

You see them on movies mostly.

Some of you got the privilege of growing up in the country where you got to be around horses and got to be around a horse that wasn't what we call broken yet.

That's an interesting word, isn't it?

Breaking a horse.

An unbroken horse, man, they're powerful and they're scary, aren't they?

Have you ever been around a big enough horse to scare you?

Man, those things can kill you.

And they're just crazy.

Even when you get on a broken horse, if you're not used to riding horses, you realize like this is not a bicycle.

Not even an e-bike, right?

Like those things you like, those things move, right?

Motorcycles.

Horses are just, because they're living, breathing things.

And when they take off, man, they're a little bit scary.

But they do these crazy things, cowboys.

They put a bit in their mouth.

And what a bit does is take all that power and bring it under control.

If the horse is broken.

What meekness is, is power under control.

That's biblically what meekness is.

It's not being timid or shy or passive.

It means tons of power under control.

So the meekness of wisdom means this, that God has in his spirit is taking someone who is saying, I want to be yours, Lord.

filling them with a Holy Spirit that is full of boldness, but at the same time, giving them wisdom, which makes them meek.

So here's the two words I like to stick together in that.

Somebody that's bold without humility can cause a lot of damage in the body of Christ.

And somebody who's bold without humility can cause a lot of damage in the body of Christ.

In other words, they can say a lot of truthful things and be very hurtful.

You ever experienced those people?

They speak truth and

And it's just like, you're just getting slapped all the time.

And then there's people that are very humble and have zero boldness, and they love you really well, but they struggle saying the hard things.

And this is Jesus, watch.

Full of boldness, full of humility.

So that while you're being punched, to use his words, he's also got his arms around you.

While he's got his arms around you, he's also saying, hey,

Listen to me about how much I love you.

Listen to me about this foolishness.

That's what wisdom does in us.

It makes us humbly bold.

That meekness of wisdom.

This is what foolishness does, James says.

Watch this.

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition.

Man, I've seen so many pastors stand in a place with bitter jealousy and selfish ambition.

Full of boldness.

a lot of truth, but very little love.

So he's not just talking about the wicked boss that you have that doesn't know Jesus.

This is us in the control of the flesh.

Do not boast and be false to the truth.

This is not wisdom that comes down from above, but notice where it comes from.

It's earthly and unspiritual.

That means it comes from your flesh, but it also comes from a second place.

It's demonic.

God's saying this, when you and I are walking in foolishness, our flesh is rising up, taking control.

And who's the author of all that foolish wisdom in your life?

Jesus said it this way, Satan is the father of every lie.

So every bit of foolishness that you and I are living in that's a lie is from the author of lies, which makes it demonic.

I'm not saying that you're being controlled by a demon at that point.

What I am saying this is that foolishness is coming from the heart of Satan.

And your own flesh.

And so when we walk in human earthly wisdom, it is bitter.

It is jealous.

It is selfishly ambitious.

It comes from our flesh and demonic places.

And then it says this.

This is the end result.

For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder in every vile practice.

Walking in foolishness leads to sin and disunity in the body.

And that means in your house, but also in the body of Christ.

When you and I aren't stewarding the time God has given us through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit submitted to it, we're walking in foolishness and we're going to bring sin into our body and we're going to bring disunity.

And you see that in your own house.

I mean, in your own house, there's a reason there's disunity because someone's trying to walk in the wisdom of Christ and someone's not, so there's disunity.

And I'm not talking about what color should we make the carpet.

Now, how we have those conversations can get very disunifying, right?

Because we talk to each other with anger and malice and selfish ambition.

I want my way.

But when we're making decisions about carpets, I mean, that's not what God's talking about.

What he's talking about is like, who's going to

are we agreeing that this is God's time?

Are we agreeing that this is God's space?

Are we agreeing that this is God's family?

Are we agreeing that this is God's direction?

Foolishness leads us to disorder.

Every vile practice leads to sin, disunity.

Foolishness is marked by walking in bitterness, selfish ambition, boasting, distorting the truth, but at its core, it's from our flesh and Satan.

So just a couple of questions here that I think is great, and we're going to put this into practice in a minute, but

Ask the Spirit to show you where you're consistently doing something that is foolish, that needs to stop.

When's the last time you asked the Lord that?

Lord, where am I consistently walking in foolishness?

That is not your way.

If you won't make this a matter of prayer, what is your heart saying?

Your heart is saying, I want to live in rebellion to God.

And I'm going to be honest with us in this room right now, me included.

Some of you are just living in rebellion to God and foolishness to you feels like wisdom.

You're like, this is my time.

It's the McDonald's commercial.

You know, and then how's the end of that commercial end?

I'm loving it.

Because you're like, this is about me.



My time, my place, I've sacrificed for everybody else in the world.

Now it's about me.

And that sounds like wisdom, but what it is is foolishness at times.

And I'm not saying we don't need to rest and we don't need to spend.

I'm not saying that.

But when you say no longer am I going to serve others, but I'm just going to serve me, that's selfish ambition.

And at some point, that sounds super wise when we're tired and frustrated with all the idiocy around us.

all the fools around us, quote the word.

But it's us just walking in foolishness too.

Walking in foolishness, it's the next statement I want to make and we're going to pray about foolishness.

Walking in foolishness may come from walking in fear and pride and anxiety and a whole host of other things.

But understand this, walking in foolishness is rebellion to holy God and comes from our flesh and Satan.

So I want to pray right now and I want to pray that God would just

Maybe it begins here, Lord, just help me want to pray this prayer.

Or maybe you really do want to pray this prayer.

And I pray right now that God would show you a place that you're walking in foolishness.

But maybe every morning you'd wake up and just say, Lord, I want your wisdom today.

I don't want to walk in foolishness.

Wherever this prayer lands for you, let's pray it right now.

And let's pray for each other.

God, all over this room, we just ask you to show us where we're walking in foolishness right now, God, in this place, that you would open our eyes to see it and that you would empower us to stop.

not by our own will, by our own ways, but through your Holy Spirit.

God, would you give us the desire to pray this prayer?

As we wake up, as we go to bed tonight, and God, would our days going forward be marked by saying, Lord, don't let us walk in foolishness.

Give us your wisdom.

Would we be open and truly asking you, Lord, to show us?

We can only do this through your spirit, Lord.

No other way it's gonna happen.

So help us, Lord.

We pray this in your name, Jesus.

Thankfully, James goes on to tell us

what wisdom looks like.

Verse 17 in James chapter 3 says, but the wisdom that's from above is pure.

It means it's not full of all the other stuff that foolishness is full of.

It's full of God's holiness, God's perfection, God's right ways.

It's pure.

And then it says because it's full of who God is, then all these things come with it because we get the very presence of God, peaceable.

Because God is peace, we get peaceableness.

We get gentleness because that's who he is, open to reason.

Man, you know one of the most defining things about believers that are walking in the wisdom of God, when you sit down to talk to them about things that you think are going to be hard to talk about, they are open to reason.

It doesn't mean they agree with you or everything you're saying, but they're humble enough to listen to you.

Foolish people have their minds made up before they walk into the room to talk to you about everything.

And they won't listen to you and you know it.

As you sit down and start to talk to them, you're like, well, this is a closed conversation.

Why are we even talking?

If that's you, by the way, that's not godly wisdom.

And I'm not saying open to changing your beliefs on Jesus Christ as the son of God.

That's not what he's saying about being open to.

What he's saying is, will you just listen to the other person when you're having this conversation about some direction, some permissive will thing?

Will you hear?

Open to reason.

from the Lord, mostly, is what he's talking about.

Full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere, walking in godly understanding of his will, first requires seeking his wisdom.

You and I cannot know the wisdom of God if we're not asking for it.

You just don't have it imbued in you.

Can I say this?

I mean, the Holy Spirit of God lives in you, so you have access to all the wisdom of God.

But you have to ask.

Philippians 2 says it this way, you have the mind of Christ

You have the mind of Christ.

And then he tells us how to like submit like Christ did so that mind can live through us.

So you gotta ask and that's what we're gonna do in a minute.

God, give us wisdom.

What does that look like though?

Walking in godly wisdom only comes from the spirit.

We've gotta submit to his wisdom

in his will, and at the end of the day, it means submitting to him.

You're never gonna submit to the wisdom of God if you're not submitting to God.

Part of my biggest, I'm gonna confess my sin for you, part of my biggest issue with walking in the wisdom of God is mostly that I just don't wanna submit to God, not that I don't wanna know what he wants me to do.

All of us really want God to tell us what to do.

Listen, let me back up.

All of us wanna hear God's wisdom on what to do.

We just don't want God telling us what to do.

And that sounds contradictory, but you live with people like that, right?

You go into people and ask them for advice, but you don't really want them to tell you what to do.

You want to give them all of the secrets of the knowledge they have because they've lived longer than you have, or they've worked this job longer than you have.

And you have people like that in your life.

They come to you and say, Yoda, give me all your wisdom.

And then you tell them, and then they go do what they want to do.

And you're like, why are you talking to me?

That's what we do with God.

Let me give you a visual.

We want the hand of God.

We just don't want the heart of God.

We want God to provide.

We just don't want God to tell us what to do with it once he provides.

And so that's not seeking God's wisdom.

It's saying, God, I want to know, do I turn right or turn left?

He's saying, I want you to turn right.

But by the way, I'm driving this car.

You're not.

We want to turn right and kind of kick God out of the car.

Or at least sit in the back seat.

Maybe that old station wagon that's facing backwards.

That's kind of where we want to put God, you know, back there facing backwards.

And we'll drive to tell me where to turn.

God's our GPS for life, not our God.

God's not your GPS for how you live life.

He is our life.

And if you're going to submit to his wisdom, you've got to submit to him.

It doesn't come separately.

I'll get real specific about my sin in that in two seconds.

So walking in godly wisdom only comes from the spirit.

We must submit to him, his will, and to him.

So Father, just help us right now as we talk practical things.

Remind us that these don't work without submitting to you.

We pray this in your name, Jesus.

Amen.

I'm going to finish with giving you some practical things and then coming back to the gospel of how these things really only happen at a heart level.

All right?

So here's some practical things, and we'll talk more about these in the coming weeks.

How do we walk in wisdom?

Understanding his will for how we use time.

So walking in the Spirit's will, redeeming time requires this ongoing intentionality and submission.

It's an ongoing intentionality to pray to the Lord and ask for his wisdom, to seek his word out for his wisdom, to talk to other believers.

There's an intentionality, but then there's a submission.

Here's some ways to pray into this ongoing call of command of redeeming the time.

And I'm gonna start with big picture thoughts today, like big picture thoughts, okay?

So here's the first big picture thought.

Ask the Lord to reveal his will concerning current commitments that you have.

Let me say, these are big picture thoughts.

What are you already committed to?

What people, what thing are you already committed to?

Because a lot of us wanna know God's direction for this, that, and the other.

And I just wanna start with, what are you already committed to?

In other words, if you're married,

everybody listen, if you're married, you're committed.

You're committed to a marriage, you're a husband, you're a wife.

And so that is a, that is, and you're like, well, what does this have to do with God's wisdom?

Because God wants you to know his wisdom for your marriage.

Men, God wants you to know how to shepherd your wife, not just be a housemate or a roommate.

God never called you to be a roommate if you're married, called you to be a shepherd.

All right?

And so wives, he didn't call you to be a, to be a whatever you think fill in that blank is.

He's called you and I to be co-heirs.

He's called you to be this, this word that's used in the Old Testament, this eber, eger, genizo is the only place that gets used when it, in Genesis where it says, I'm going to make a help mate for my, for this man, help meet.

This word only gets used for God.

all through that nowhere else does it get used for any person.

The wife gets this name put on her, and it's the word that God uses for himself when he says how he's going to help Israel.

So he's not calling you a subservient.

He's saying like, man, what does it look like for us to come together and fight for hearts together, for each other's hearts, for our kids' hearts, for family's hearts, for other kids' hearts, for people.

I mean, that's not about only if you're only married, man.

You have friends, you have family.

Like, what does this look like?

For the places we're already committed.

So just, I'll go back to marriage.

If you're committed there, how do we know what God's asking?

Here's the second thing.

What does his word clearly reveal about this commitment of marriage?

I'm going to use that as an example.

And the time you're spending toward it.

And you may say, I've never really looked in the word for what I'm supposed to be as a husband.

There you go.

Begin there.

You say, I don't know how to do that.

I'm not a pastor.

I don't know where to look.

What do you call your groups here?

Gospel communities?

Is that what you call them?

GCs?



Like, I think your GC leader could help.

And some of you GC leaders just went, oh no.

Like all that means is you open the Bible with them and find two or three passages about being a husband and being a wife and just sit down and start looking at the word together and praying.

It would probably be good for you too.

I know it'd be good for me.

You don't have to look at every single passage in the entire Bible about being a husband or a wife, but look at

how we're to love one another and what he talks about it, husbands and wives, and just start looking at God's revealed will about the commitments you've made.

And that'll help you steward your time because if you're not doing anything to shepherd your family or your wife, what are you doing, guys?

That's where the majority of your brain power outside of maybe a job, if you're a surgeon, I don't want you thinking about shepherding your family while you're operating on me.

Think about me, okay?

So I get it, some of you have jobs you need to think about while you're doing them.

But I know this, some of you, while you're at work, are looking at ESPN, reading face, whatever thing you're on, whatever social media you're on, are looking at texts from all your friends,

or just reading the news, and I'm just saying maybe some of that time could be spent towards thinking about, praying about how you shepherd your wife when you go home.

Because you have two jobs if you're married.

One is the one you work at, the other one's your house.

And when you go home thinking that's not your job, you're not walking in the revealed will of God.

You really have three jobs if you have kids.

You're a parent also.

So,

Look at the revealed will of God, man.

I'm not just picking on the men in the room.

Ladies, same.

And some of you are like, well, I'm not married.

That leaves me out.

No.

Okay.

Well, I'll ask you this.

What are you committed to?

Some of you are like, well, I'm committed to working in the high school ministry here.

Okay.

Have you looked in the word about what that looks like in the time you're spending there and what you're doing with the students you're investing in, the parents you're supposed to be loving on?

I don't talk to parents.

Why not?

Well, that's somebody else's job.

Whose job?

Jesus.

Okay.

I'll give you that one.

But it's not Jeff's job just to talk to parents.

It's not just your student minister's job to talk to parents.

If you're working with high school students, it's part of your job.

Go tell the parents how you love what's going on in their kid's heart.

Go tell them what you see that they could be praying for.

Ask them, how are they praying for their kid?

Man, you want to get a parent on your side, high school worker, middle school worker?

Go ask a parent how you can pray for their kid.

What are you doing looking at in God's revealed will that's going to help you walk out these things?

Third thing on there, what does his wisdom reveal as you seek from his word?

Because you may be saying, I don't even know where to begin.

Here's what you do.

You go seek in his word.

You go pray, listen to the Holy Spirit.

You go talk to other believers.

I even believe this, experiences and following Jesus help us as we're trying to figure out how to steward the things we're already committed to.

I talked to this guy the other day who we were talking about parenting.

And he's a new believer.

And he said, man, I really don't have any idea what I'm doing, but I'm learning a lot from the word and these people that are discipling me.

And I said, well, I just asked him this one question.

I said, is there anything else you've ever done in your life that you think God could use you, not use, not to show you exactly how to do it, but to give you an idea that this is way bigger.

And yet also I've prepared your heart for this in ways you've not even imagined.

And he's like, man, I'm not even thought about that.

I said, go pray about it.

He came back to me the next day and said, I've spent my whole life training dogs.

Now you need to hear this out.

Because dogs and kids are way different.

But listen, he trained them in the military.

He's trained them in the police department.

Now he trains them as a retired cop.

And he said this.

He said, I've learned this about training animals.

One, the more you love them, the better trained they are.

He said, people that train animals with fear don't get real obedience.

People that train animals with love get man loyalty.

That's not what you're after as a parent.

But he said, I realize I need to love my kids more as I'm training them, equipping them.

And he said, man, I learned a lot of things about training animals.

If I can learn those things, I can learn how to love my kids and train my kids.

And that was his takeaway from practical life experience.

Listen, God gives us life experiences to walk into some of the things that you're going to do that you're going to go, God, you want me to do this?

And God's like, Moses spent 50, 80 years in the desert as a shepherd before he became a shepherd of God's people.

Do you don't think that had anything to do with what he's going to do?

40 years, not 80, excuse me.

Spent 40 years in a palace with the kings of Pharaohs of Egypt, learning how to organize stuff.

You don't think that impacted how he led those people in the desert?

God was preparing him with pagan things, earthly things to do a godly thing.

And so hear me.

I mean, you're going to get experiences that don't go apples for apples, one for one, but they're going to be used by God in these things.

And I just want to encourage you to think about those things.

Testing is the last thing on here.

What God wants you to do.

This is from Romans 12.

It's not on the screen, but I need you to hear this.

Present your bodies as a living sacrifice.

This is what I mean by submission.

Romans 12, 1 and 2.

Holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual act of worship.

He's saying this.

This isn't yours, like we said at the beginning, right?

So give yourself to the Lord fully as a living sacrifice every day.

And as you do that, watch what he says happen.

Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

As you lay your life before God saying, my life is yours, all of this is yours, he says, I'm going to start transforming your mind.

And as I transform your mind, he says this, then you will be able to test and discern what the will of God is.

Go write this down, Romans 12, 1 and 2.

Just go look at that today.

That one verse could help you pray about all the commitments you already have and how you walk in those things even better because you only get to test the will of God as you're laying yourself down as a sacrifice before him.

You can't test the will of God as a disobedient, rebellious, non-submissive, living follower of Christ.

He says die.

Now what do you do, last two things, with potential new commitments because this is what everybody wants to know.

I've got this new opportunity.

What do I do?

Here's the same things.

What does the word clearly reveal about this commitment?

You got a new opportunity.

What's it reveal?

What does wisdom from God say about all this?

And then I want to add all the same things.

And I want to add this third thing.

If you've got a new opportunity in front of you, how is this new opportunity going to impact other commitments you've made?

And you may say, well, what do I mean?

So

Just listen to me and my experience here and my practical.

I'm dealing with this right now.

I'm a husband.

My kids are out of the house.

So I don't have to deal with parenting them all the time.

Parenting adult kids is much harder than parenting little kids.

I'll just tell you that.

So you got that to look forward to as you grow up.

Also get to parent my dad a little bit because he can't do a lot of things.

So I'm parenting like parents and kids.

And I have a whole lot of responsibility and no authority.

That stinks.

But I love it because God's called me to it.

And that's a commitment in my life right now.

And so I'm committed to my dad.

I'm committed to my kids in a way that's very different than I ever have been.

Definitely committed to my wife, married her, my pastor at a church.

I have a whole bunch of buckets there, big commitments I do.

And then someone came up to me the other day and said, hey, would you preach four Sundays in July for me?

And now every part of me, because I love to preach and love to fight for hearts, not do conferences, but fight for hearts is like, yes.

And then the Lord was like, wait.

Wait.

And this is all I'm saying to you.

How will making a commitment like that for four weeks, which requires time, study, prayer, all that stuff, how will that impact all these other commitments I've got?

Because they're going to.

It's not just a wash.

I don't just have hours of time sitting around like, what am I going to do with my time today?

Oh, I know.

I'll spend another.

I don't.

And so something's being put aside for a second in order to do this.

Does that make sense?

Same thing in your life.

And if you don't think about those things, your wife walks up to you one day and says, where are you going today at 8.30 in the morning?

Why are you getting in your car and driving off?

Oh, I forgot to tell you, I'm going to Heartland to preach.

By the way, that's happened.

Didn't happen this time, but that's happened in my life.

And she's like, and you know what your wife thinks?

Like, I don't count.

What you do for God matters.



And all sorts of lies fill her head.

Now, that's just one example of the impact.

You've got all sorts of other commitments you made.

If you don't have the time, the bandwidth, the heart with all the things, the emotional bandwidth to take on a new commitment, that may be God telling you no.

It may not be against his will.

It may just be not the right time, not the right season.

Does that make sense?

And so as you're praying about these things, it's not just, do I love doing this?

Has God called me to this?

Because yes, yes, and yes on this.

But I had to think about some other things in order to say yes to this.

And then make some appropriate decisions on the side so that people wouldn't be left out of my time that I've already committed to.

And so I just want to tell you, when you're praying about understanding God's will and being wise, I just want you to begin here.

What are the commitments I'm already involved in?

How does God want me to shepherd those, steward those?

Because I believe that some of us are being foolish with the commitments we already have.

And it's never too late to turn that around and walk in wisdom.

Doesn't matter who you are.

It's never too late.

It's always too early to quit, too.

Like, hey, it doesn't matter.

My kid's already grown and gone.

Stop that, older person.

Stop.

Walk in wisdom.

You're going to continue to do more damage to your kids if you're walking in foolishness as a parent trying to parent your older kids.

And some of you younger parents in this room are dealing with the foolishness of your older parents right now.

Yes, don't say amen too loud because they might be in the room.

But that's true, right?

So you're dealing with the foolishness of your parents.

Don't be that parent someday.

It's never too late to start walking in the wisdom of God for those commitments you have.

So walk in those things.

Right now, look at them.

If you're making a new one, ask the Lord these same questions.

Pray, seek the word, talk to other believers.

Every decision that I've made in my life as a Christ follower that I've walked outside of God's will and wisdom came in two ways.

One, I walked outside of his will and I was just flat out in rebellion.

I was just like, God, I don't care.

I'm gonna do what I wanna do because I feel like your wisdom is not good.

This isn't, you're not being good to me.

And what sin is, we're just like, you don't know, I know.

Do you understand that's what you're saying when you walk in sin?

And like you listening to me talk about it, you're like, well, boy, you're a fool, John.

Yes.

That's why it uses that word.

But when you do it, you're a fool too.

And so our sin is just saying to God, like, I know better.

And your heavenly father's weeping tears over your sin, knowing that the punishment for you has already been poured out on Christ and

He doesn't have to come at you angrily now.

He comes at you and it says it's his what that leads you to repentance.

What is it?

His kindness.

That means he pursues you and he loves you and he comes after you.

Right now he's coming after us.

When you're in rebellion to God, we have no idea what it costs to God's name.

You're defaming God's name to the people you live with, the people that you love, the people around you when you go against his will.

People see God as one thing and it's not true.

But it also hurts your own heart and distorts

life for other people.

It just says this, sin equals death.

That's what the Bible says.

Ultimately, our death for rebellion to God, but it kills things, relationships, friendships, people's trust, all sorts of things when we sin.

That's been part of my disobedient path.

Here's the second way I've disobeyed God and walked in my own.

I wanted to do what God wanted to do.

I saw his will like preaching or whatever it is, planting a church.

And I said, Lord, I'm going to do this.

And instead of asking the Lord, seeking it out in prayer and the word and talking to other believers and other leaders in my life, I just made a plan and then asked God to bless it.

You ever done that?

Boy, I'm glad you're not as dumb as I am because that is what leaders do in the church all the time.

That is what leaders do in their house all the time.

Hey, we're going to buy this house and I'm not going to ask the Lord because he might tell me no.

And then we go get ourselves in debt and then we're just dealing with the consequences of that for a 30-year loan.

And it's not like God didn't want you to have a place to live in.

You knew that's his will for you, but you didn't want to ask him about this one because you might understand the point, right?

I've done the same thing.

And the other side of that gets real confusing because it's like, Lord, I was doing what you wanted me to do.

And the Lord's like, yes, but not how I wanted you to do it.

And so this is where we're going to end with.

Here's the gospel.

Psalm 37 verse 4 says this, delight yourself in the Lord.

We're going to start here next week and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Here's where this big picture prayer begins.

If delighting yourself in the Lord isn't

where you're asking your heart to go every day, desires are gonna be crazy.

Man, they're just gonna be crazy.

They're gonna be led by your passion, by your flesh, by your will, by even godly things that God's calling you to do, but they're gonna be your desires.

And then you're gonna wonder, is this me, or is this God, or is this the Mexican food I ate last night?

You know those when we're making decisions and we don't know what it is, and we get into those moments?

Here's where I'm telling you it begins.

Because the Lord delights in you because of Christ in you.

You don't have, this verse doesn't begin with, ask the Lord if he delights in you.

Don't you love that?

You don't have to ask the Lord, Lord, do you love me with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?

Because he does.

He's proven that.

You don't have to ask him, Lord, do you love your name, your glory?

He's proven that.

So he loves his name and his glory, and he loves you.

I think he loves his name more than he loves you, and that's probably good for you to hear this morning.

But you need to hear this.

He loves his name.

He loves you.

That's not up for question.

He's saying this, do you love me?

Heart, soul, mind, and strength.

That's what the word delight means.

When he was restoring Peter at the end of his ministry after his sin, he looked at Peter and said, Peter, do you love me?

He asked him three times.

In the end of that

after Peter answered him and said yes and was weeping about it, he said, then go feed my sheep because that's what I've called you to do.

He's asking you to delight in him.

This isn't a formula, by the way, but when you delight in him, this is what I believe the word says, and it says this all over the Bible, he will start to put into you his desires.

It doesn't say he will give you what you want.

What it's saying is this, he will give you into your heart his desires.

So you'll start to recognize your dad's voice.

And that wonderful parents how you can walk in a room and there'll be 50 kids and all of a sudden you hear that voice of that kid and you know it's yours.

And what they're saying is, mom, they don't call you by your first name.

They're not saying, John.

They're like, dad.

And you're like, that could be 50 kids calling any dad and you know it's your kid because you know their voice.

How awesome would it be to know your father's voice like that?

You know how you know your father's voice like that?

You delight in him.

It means you're in his word.

It means you're praying.

You're listening to other believers.

You're walking in the counsel of the wise, not the wicked.

And in that delight, desires are a whole lot easier to discern.

We're going to talk more about that, but here's where it begins today.

Do you believe that he delights in you because of Christ?

And if he does, and you believe that,

Christ is in you then here's where we get to pray God because you delighted me let me delight in you the spirit of God that flung those stars into space delights in the father and in the son more than you do and his will is for you to love the Lord your God the way he does God the father God the spirit God the son all one loving each other spirit in you now causing you to delight in him so God right now would you cause us to delight in Jesus the way you do

We ask in the name of Jesus that our delight would begin to fuel desires like never before.

It would even out wrong desires, foolish things.

Even in this room right now, out foolish things, Lord.

Call us to repentance and then, Lord, would that repentance look like us delighting in you, delighting in you, delighting in you.

We ask in the name of Jesus that you'd bring together delight and desires.

God, don't make this about a formula where if we delight in you, you're going to give us things we want.

Make this about just loving you and then listening to your will.

God, thank you for your word, for your spirit, for prayer, for other believers, for the body of Christ, for leaders.

God, ultimately, we thank you that you speak to us.

Give us your wisdom today.

And we pray this in your name, Jesus.

Amen.