

Title: Becoming a Wise Family Part 1¹

Praise the Lord for another week where we can worship the Living God through songs, praise, giving and now the Word.

Introduction: We have had some really crazy weather the past three weeks. And after these three weeks of crazy weather, I like to take a hike through the woods with my family and enjoy God's creation. But in order to enjoy this time, we had to prepare. Before we had kids, we could just throw on our shoes and jump into a trail in less than five minutes.

Now with 2 young children, we have a laundry list of things to bring. We have to put on the proper clothing for the children. It can't make them too hot or too cold. We have to bring sippie cups for them to drink fluids. We have to make sure we know where we are going because they might get too tired. We would need to bring the right stroller for the children in our off road travels. Finally we would need good spirits, or else it would be for nothing. We have to be patient in case the children want to stop and look at God's creation. If we did not prepare, and then we would be foolish.

Now this is just one short story on our long journey of life. My wife and I prepare physical things for thirty minutes in order to enjoy four hours of fun with our family. However, how many of us spend thirty minutes on spiritual things in order to enjoy a lifetime of blessing under the Living God. You see, it is wise to work on the family and not just work in the family.

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If you didn't grow up in a Christian family where the Word of God is central, you are living life according to the world's standards. You get married and start a family according to the world's standards. Why do we follow the world's standards? Because that is what most of us know. Or maybe you did grow up in a strong Christian family; it doesn't mean that you actually are putting into practice what the Bible says.

As Christians we must "put off" our former way of living and "put on" God's way of living. And God's way of living affects our understanding of how to relate in a family. One way of living leads to pain, misery and suffering. Another way of living leads to joy, love and blessing. One way is a way of folly. The other is a way of wisdom.

And many of us have taken something from this world and have incorporated it into our families. Today I will start a two part series on becoming a wise family. Today's sermon will focus on the putting off part. Next week's sermon will focus on the putting on part. So today we will learn from God's Word what it means to put off foolish things and next week we will learn what it means to put on wise things. So today's main idea is...

Main Idea: Becoming a foolish family. Now nobody wants to become a foolish family. How many of us if asked you today, would you like to become a foolish family, would raise their hands? Verbally we say "no". But how many of us by our actions become more and more like a foolish family. Today we will recognize five foolish characteristics of a foolish family.

So let's begin with a word of prayer.

So let's take a spiritual journey together and visit the foolish family. The first characteristic of a foolish family that we would recognize would be careless feet.

Reckless/Careless Feet – 14:16 – Kesel (BDB 492)

Court TV Illustration: When I was in high school I used to hate watching Court TV. I hated it because I didn't want to be told that my way of life was foolish. I didn't want someone to have authority over MY LIFE.

A couple of years ago I went on this Court TV kick. I would watch it nearly every day. Why you might ask? Because she would deal with some of the most careless people in the world. They would get a title loan on their vehicle in order to go on vacation with their mistress. They would tell someone they would return a car rental and never turn it in and think nothing of it. They would do things just because they felt like it. It is a life of recklessness and carelessness.

Proverbs 14:16 states:

One who is wise is cautious¹ and turns away from evil, but a fool is reckless and careless.

So a wise person or family thinks things through. They are cautious when they come upon hazards or deceptions.

Not so with the foolish person or family. They just recklessly and carelessly go through life.

The word fool here is Kesel. It means literally a blockhead, because, deaf to wisdom, from their distorted moral vision, of which they are prideful, they delight in twisting values that benefit themselves. He will become morally perverse because he is a blockhead (Waltke 112).

22:3 The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it.

So the question is: Do you have careless feet? Do you buy things on the fly? Do you go from thing to thing to thing? Do you try to fill a void that only God can fill?

You need to put off carelessness and recklessness. You need to replace it with purposeful steps. Maybe you don't have careless feet. Maybe your issue are your eyes. The second characteristic in a foolish family is distracted eyes.

Distracted Eyes 17:24 – Kesel - covetousness

Distracted eyes. Distracted eyes are eyes that never stay focused. Never deal with life as it is. Always thinking about what could have been, what life could be, instead of what reality really is.

Proverbs 17:24 The discerning sets his face toward wisdom, but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

The wise set their eyes on wisdom and their choices are influenced by wisdom. The Foolish family set their eyes on distant, godless and unattainable goals which does nothing for them. So the wise focus on wisdom from God's Word, you can apply it right away. However, the fool seeks wisdom from one useless idea to another to another. And this profits them nothing.

The NASB says "wisdom is in the presence of the one who has understanding". "In the presence of" is used 32 times and is used near the presence of the Lord. It means that a wise person has the Lord's wisdom near them. They can call upon the Lord's wisdom when needed. Whereas, the ends of the earth is used 24 times and means wrong and unattainable goals. The fool follows the way of the world, which only leads to bad choices and bad consequences.

Maybe your feet or eyes are not the problem. Maybe you are always in attack mode. Maybe you have quick fists.

Fast/Quick Fists – 18:6 – Kesel - anger

Do you have quick fists? Fools have quick fists. I remember in 5th grade I was playing basketball with Nick. It was a close game and then one of us pushed the other. All I remember was that our fists went up

and kids in the playground were yelling “fight”, “fight”. Now we don’t come to physical blows anymore. Most families are too sophisticated for that. We carry on with verbal blows. We cut down each other and destroy each other by the words we speak. Instead of giving life and encouraging we destroy.

18:6 A fool's lips walk into a fight, and his mouth invites a beating.

The foolish family are constantly getting into fights. Whenever they talk, there is strife, contention, quarrels. The NLT has, “Fools get into constant quarrels”. I remember my best friend moved into his new neighborhood and his neighbors came by. They told him that they have marital issues and the way that their psychologists told them to deal with issues is to scream them out their frustration to one another. Swearing, belittling. Middle fingers. Go for it. So my best friend at times hears the craziest fights. Foolishness. Complete and utter foolishness.

The second part of the verse is “his mouth invites a beating”. The NLT has “they are asking for a beating”. So by their combative, quick fists, life comes to blows. They remind me of a Jerry Springer show. Constantly letting fights turn into actual fists. Having security break stop fights on the show. Foolishness.

Proverbs 20:3 It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife, but every fool will be quarreling.

Whereas, quick fists is more explosive anger. The fourth characteristic is more respectable among evangelicals. It is having loose lips.

Lying/Loose Lips – 18:21; 10:18 – kesel (BDB 17) – slander, gossip, lying, malicious

Loose lips are the more subtle ways to attack one another. Call it what you want. Passive aggressive, ambitious, controlling, calculating. Let’s use some biblical terms: how about slander, gossip, lying, malicious,

corrupt speech. Loose lips are the fourth characteristic of a foolish family because they can often do the most damage.

Proverbs 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

10:18 The one who conceals hatred has lying lips, and whoever utters slander is a fool.

I remember an immigrant was working here in America for many years and would send money back to his children through his unfaithful spouse. After many years, his children came to America to visit him. After a couple of days, together his children asked with tears why their father never sent them money. This man’s heart was shattered. His wife told the children their father abandoned them and only she was caring for them. He was destroyed and has become an alcoholic.

And fools not only hurt others but they also hurt the fool. Proverbs tells us:

14:3 By the mouth of a fool comes a rod for his back,¹ but the lips of the wise will preserve them.

So do you have loose lips? Do you slander, gossip and lie about other people?

As a young Chaplain, my senior Chaplain caught me talking about my commander and rebuked me. He said we don’t talk about people behind their backs. When someone talks behind someone’s back it means they will also talk about you. They have loose lips. He was trying to teach me the wisdom of controlling my lips and not talking about others.

So far the characteristics of foolish family have been careless feet, distracted eyes, quick fists and loose lips. The final is the most dangerous. It is plugged ears.

Filled/Plugged Ears – 12:15 – Ewil – avoiding, unteachable

It's an interesting thing, when I tell Keziah to do something she doesn't want to. She does this thing where she closes her eyes and thinks I can't see her. Or do you remember in grade school when someone was telling you something you didn't want to hear? You would stick your fingers in your ears and say lalalalala.

Of course we don't do childish things anymore. But how many of us do this emotionally? We do this spiritually? We don't put our fingers in our ears but we often refuse to hear, refuse to listen. There are so many people that know the word of God, hear the word of God but do not do what it says. Plugged ears.

12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.

The word fool here is ewil. Ewil is blockheaded by virtue of his moral perversion. His root is foolishness. And it is so hard to tell a fool they are wrong because they always think they are right. And if we don't allow ourselves to be accountable to one another, to be real with one another. We will walk around with plugged ears. We will never change.

17:10 A rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool.

As a chaplain, there are some people I tell them, hey man I love you and care for you. However, I see this in your life. By next week, problem solved, they are walking closer to Christ. But there are some people, man. You keep telling them. They have been working on the same thing for years. What does it take to break plugged ears?

Proverbs 27:22 You cannot separate fools from their foolishness, even though you grind them like grain with mortar and pestle. NLT

Conclusion

Well we have taken a spiritual journey into the house of the foolish family and have found five foolish characteristics: careless feet, distracted eyes, quick fists, loose lips, and plugged ears. So what if you have one or three or all five? Well you put off foolishness and put on wisdom.

But you might be thinking, "Well pastor, I grew up in a broken home, I only know foolishness, what do I do?" Well you turn to wisdom. Put off foolishness, put on wisdom. "I don't know pastor my family is divorced, and I am just trying to get by. Just trying to live another day". Put off foolishness, put on wisdom. "But pastor you don't understand, I have grown up children, I have grandchildren and they are living in foolishness. I can see it in the way they treat their family". Put off foolishness, put on wisdom. "Sorry pastor but I have been foolish for the past five years, for the past ten years, for my entire marriage?" Put off foolishness, put on wisdom.

The Christian life is a lifelong process. We are constantly being reformed into Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. But the Christian life is also a point of decision. We do come to forks in the road. If you take Guilbeau west from the church, you encounter 1604. You must make a choice. Either you go left or right. And in our Christian walk we come upon forks in the road, one way is the way of wisdom, the other is the way of foolishness. The choice is yours to make.