

Subject: Sermon 9-23-01

Proverbs 9:10

INTRO - So maybe you have heard, or maybe you haven't heard about my moose hunting misadventure. I'll share with you.

First, I was hunting up north where I usually hunt, with Dave Zellar's brother. But Andrew got called into the Air Force a week early, so I only got to hunt 2 days. However, after we got Andy on his plane I had a couple of days of vacation left and I went fishing on the Little Su and took my gun. I already had a number of fish in the boat and heard a rustling across the stream. There in the open, about a stones throw away was a moose, a bull, a legal spike. Only, I was about 15 yards from the boat and my gun. I moved to my gun, and the moose heard the sloshing and moved also. But, as I moved back I could see it, eating away. It's head was more visible now, because it was behind the bushes, but, for some reason I shot at the lungs. Bang. I expected it to fall. But, it ran away and now there was blood, on me from the scope. I had been shooting uphill and in the excitement did not have the gun set well. As I looked I saw now that the moose had been behind a lot of brush, and there was even a broken trunk of a bush.

So, I shot at a moose, close, and ended up with blood from myself. I felt foolish. In fact, the e-mail I sent out said I felt STUPID!

I. However, being foolish is not a one time thing.

A. I can think of many ways I have been foolish. . . in areas and relationships that are more important than a simple hunting or fishing trip.

1. I have said things to my wife I should not have said. All I have to do is mention the words 'Belle Isle,' and she'll tell you the story.

2. I said and done things with my kids I should not have done.

3. I remember joking with friends, only more than once they did not think it was a joke. One man sent me a letter 12 years later.

4. I remember losing my temper in a sporting event, and not just once.

5. I could go on and on, and you may like to hear the stories. But, perhaps you can see there is more than foolishness here, there is a pattern of problems, or sin.

B. However, we could all tell those stories, couldn't we.

1. Could you tell funny stories, or sad stories, about things you've said, or things you've done?

2. Have you hurt others, or caused harm to yourself by bad decisions, or actions, or words.

C. The text for today's sermon is about wisdom, not foolishness.

1. The ultimate in foolishness is seen in another verse like ours.

2. Psalm 14:1 The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

3. The ultimate fool, according to Scriptures, does not believe in the one who created the world, and in love saved it.

II. In contrast, in the last week and a half I've heard more talk about wisdom, and more prayers for wisdom than I have heard in a long time.

A. You see wisdom is something we need, but do not always have.

1. What is the right thing to say in a difficult situation?

2. What do I do when nothing seems right?

3. How do I react to the foolishness of another person, or at this time in our history, how do we react to the foolishness or the evil of

another country or group?

B. So, listen again to verse 10 of today's Old Testament lesson. 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

1. Where does one find wisdom?

A. God tells us in the scriptures, in Proverbs, that wisdom begins with a 'fear of the Lord.'

B. In other words, when we know the power of God, when we know the law of God, when we know that judgment comes from breaking God's law, when we respect and honor God because we know he made the world, this is the BEGINNING of wisdom.

C. The New Testament tells us of, not the beginning, but the fulfillment of wisdom

1. 2 Timothy 3:15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2. You see, ultimate wisdom does not just come from fearing, or respecting God, but through faith in Jesus Christ.

D. Our verse tells us that when we look for understanding, as we try to understand children, or terrorists, or life itself in this sinful world, that insight we seek, that understanding starts with knowledge of God.

1. and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

2. There is a similar verse in Proverbs 1: 7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

III. As a child did you ever go on a treasure hunt? You start with a clue, and go to another, and go to another until you reach your final goal or prize. Do you understand where all this of wisdom leads? It is sort of like following clues to a treasure.

A. We are foolish, sinful, mistake prone people, but the gift, the prize God has waiting for us is wisdom for living.

1. 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, or The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.

2. Either way, knowing God and His law gives direction to life.

2. Knowledge of God's son Jesus, faith in him, gives God's gift of eternal life: the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

3. Ultimately God gives wisdom and eternal life to those who know Him in faith and humility, and THIS KNOWLEDGE OF HIM this is found in the Scripture.

B. I WANT TO REPEAT THAT All this is found in the Scripture.

1. You've heard me say it before, but it is important, vital, that God's people are in His word.

2. In God's word, in the Bible, we find the knowledge of Lord who is our Creator, our Father, our Judge, our Shepherd, our Savior.

3. In God's word, in the Bible we find our relationship with Him through faith.

4. In God's word we find a foundation to stand on, to live on.

C. So, what are you doing about that?

1. How are you in God's word, and how do you plan to stay there?

2. Do you read the Bible regularly?

3. Do you attend Bible class? You know, we have some kind of class almost every day of the week here at St. John.

4. The first week of Sunday School at St. John, on September 9 there were 251 people in church and 150 people in Sunday School and Bible

class.

A. I guess I could say 'that's pretty good.'

B. But, where are the other 101?

C. I hope that these people too are studying God's word on a regular basis in some way, in addition to going to worship

CONCLUSION: If you were walking alongside the road and saw a \$100.00 bill, would you leave it there or pick it up? The wisdom and faith given in God's word is even more precious than rubies and pearls, according to Proverbs. However, perhaps it is so accessible we sometimes just leave it there and don't use it.

You know, the school year is starting. Our church's programs are starting up again. This is a perfect time to do more than just join a class or a group. This is a good time to get wisdom for life, wisdom that leads to life.