



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week

Wise or Foolish

There are few of us who want to be considered “foolish”. And there was a time when, as one aged, it was thought they became wise. That piece of folklore seems to have been lost to history.

But the apostle Paul took the two words and looked at them differently. Wisdom was knowing and understanding the will of God. Wisdom was knowing things that were not necessarily “provable” in worldly ways. Foolishness was turning ones back on a piece of knowledge just because you didn’t understand it. Sort of like me and electricity. Theoretically I went through the classes that told me how electricity was produced, but when it comes to how it gets in my house and does its work – well, I flip the switch and if nothing happens I “call the guy” and get it fixed.

Wisdom in the world, to me, means taking what we know of the wisdom of God and putting it to work in society. We have the book of wisdom – known as the Bible – which contains teachings from those who have spoken to God, listened intently to God, and have been taught the will of God as they have moved in the world. If we live our lives according to the will of God, we will be wise. If we ignore those teachings or feel that how we live can be done better if we follow the teachings of the world, then we have become foolish in our understanding of God and of life.

Most of us have gone through times in our lives when we wondered where we were heading or, having set a goal, wondered how we were going to get there. We probably had set backs of one kind or another or had tangents that took us off the path for a bit. It happens.

Sometimes we get discouraged and tend to give up on our dreams, and other times we get our backs up and decide that we're going to get there no matter what.

I had some difficulty being approved for ordination. It's a long story and not particularly relevant so we'll not go into it right now. Well, the time came when I was going to go before a committee for a final yes or no. I had to travel some 1500 miles to get to the meeting and I was a bit nervous to say the least. Then a pastor said "We've got a group of people who want to help you get prepared before you go." He gave me a date and time. We got together - a couple of nuns who were hospital chaplains, two Clinical supervisors, a pastor who soon became a state chair of the council of churches, a couple of incredible volunteers for the community and about 3 more pastors.

To say I felt supported at that time is to put it mildly. These wonderful people were affirming the ministry I had had among them and affirming my goal of ordained ministry. By the time they got through with me, there was NOTHING the committee I was going to could ask me that I wasn't prepared for. Without the help and support of that wonderful, caring group, I would have remained very nervous and probably would have seemed foolish in the eyes of those by whom I was being examined. But on our difficult paths, miracles sometimes come out of the blue and bless us when we had no idea it was possible or probable.

If our goals are appropriate, God has a way of helping them happen. Be wise and trust the wisdom and support of God.

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-- *Week of November 1, 2009*