

Pathetic Pride

Proverbs 19:20-21

“Control yourself!”

Who controls your body?

Can you change your heart?

Can you change someone else’s heart?

What can we really do?

Who controls humanity?

What power do you and I have to control change humanity?

Proverbs 19:20

Listen to advice and accept discipline
and at the end you will be counted among the wise.

Proverbs 19:20

“Listen to advice”

We so often imagine...

If it doesn’t make sense to me, it doesn’t make sense

The more convinced I am, the more certain it is that I am right

A fool doesn’t listen to ideas contrary to one’s own, which is the only way to learn and grow

“Accept discipline”

We so often imagine...

Pain and difficulty are without value

A fool doesn’t learn through trouble

So a fool wastes all that hardship!

“You will be counted among the wise”

Learn from others and grow through trouble, and eventually we will...

Gain wisdom

→ far more than decision making

→ skill/ability to live well in any situation

Gain the fruits of wisdom

→ peace, provision, knowledge

→ worth more than gold!

Proverbs 19:21

Many are the plans in a person’s heart,
but it is the **Lord’s purpose** that prevails.

Proverbs 19:21

“The Lord’s purpose prevails”

Only a fool denies that...

people have power to make things better

people have power to make things worse

A fool thinks that the power of people can prevent the purposes of God

No person is saved by the size of...

Bank account / Intellect / Attractiveness / Skill / Determination / Relationships / Cultural intelligence / ...

The Big Idea

True good is only found

by humbling ourselves

before others

and before the unfailing love of God

for all who hope in Him

Application

Humble ourselves before others

Learn from others

Including those we tend to look down on

Value different perspectives

“The way of fools seems right to them,
but the wise listen to advice.” *Proverbs 12:15*

But I always thought: “The wise don’t need advice!”

The wisdom of the wise is listening, learning, and following wisdom, not just their own perspectives & ideas

A wonderful gift in a diverse church: a greater wealth of perspectives & ideas...if we'll humble ourselves

Humble ourselves before God

His purposes so often don’t match ours

His strategies so often don’t match ours

His purposes will be accomplished

Ours only happen if they fit within His

Look to the future with humility

...and hope

“But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him,
on those whose hope is in his unfailing love.” *Psalm 33:18*

Like a child with a play steering wheel we foolishly think we’re in control!

In reality, “It is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.”

Psalm 33:10-11

Isaiah 14:24

I am not saying...

It doesn’t matter what we do

We should simply wait for God to do His work

I am saying...

We should learn the purposes and strategies of God and join Him in that work

“Jesus gave them this answer: ‘Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.’ ” *John 5:19*

What is the work of God that we should join?

“The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness” *Exodus 34:6*

“The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.” *Psalm 103:6*

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” *Luke 19:10*

“Father, glorify your name!” *John 12:28*

Prayer

Confess that our hope is so often in people and things that cannot save, instead of in God

Confess that sometimes we don’t even hope in God

Admit our need for...

God’s perspective, direction, and commands

God’s power to help us join His work

God’s work to accomplish His purposes

Join the purposes and strategies of God

Build up His Church

Bring people to saving faith and to grow in His ways

Bring righteousness and justice

Glorify His name

Reflection Questions

1. In what areas of life do you tend to overestimate what you or other people can accomplish, especially compared to what God can do? (This is often illustrated by worry or frustration or anger.)
2. In what areas of life do you tend to underestimate what you or other people can accomplish? (This is often illustrated by despair.)
3. What are steps we can take to correct these overestimations and underestimations?
4. In what way does diversity plus pride lead to trouble? In what way does diversity plus humility lead to wonderful blessings?
5. What purposes and strategies of God will you join in increasing ways? What are some first steps?