

GETTING THE BEST ADVICE

Last week my message was about two funerals that I had conducted the previous week. Thankfully, I had no funerals last week, but I did have a wedding. Just as I try to make each funeral service personal and meaningful, I like to take this same approach for weddings. For this wedding I had the groom's sister contact family members on both sides to see what advice they wanted to offer the bride and groom as they entered into this new season in their relationship.

On the bride's side, I was able to share advice with them from her grandparents and also her parents. On the groom's side, the advice shared came from his parents and his sister and brother-in-law. One would expect advice to come from these generations to a couple who is about to enter into marriage. What was interesting was the bride's niece, and the groom's nephew also had advice for the couple. This nephew and niece are between the ages of 4 and 6. The advice the niece gave was, **marriage needs love and hugs**. The nephew offered this advice, **have lots of family tickle fights and kisses!** Even this young niece and nephew offered some pretty wise advice to this couple.

We often seek or receive advice from people as we enter new situations or realities in our lives. In this case, family and friends would not have offered much advice to the couple when they started dating, but certainly would have done so once they became engaged and the wedding approached. When we are seeking advice, it is so important for us to be able to **discern good advice** from bad. People are well intentioned when it comes to offering their advice to us, but not all of the advice offered will be wise or best for us. A mistake some people make in these situations is **failing to seek God's** advice on what they should do. The people of Judah made this mistake at times in their relationship with God. One instance happened in Isaiah 30. The people of Judah wanted to make an alliance with Egypt. They sought advice about the benefits of such an alliance from everyone except God. This was what God said to them:

"What sorrow awaits my rebellious children. You make plans that are contrary to mine. You make alliances not directed by my Spirit, thus piling up your sins. (Isaiah 30:1)

It was fear and uncertainty that was causing the people of Judah to want to enter into this alliance with Egypt. Unfortunately, they were seeking advice from

everyone on this matter, except from God. God wanted them to know the advice they were being given was contrary to what He was advising, and entering into this alliance would turn out disastrous for them. Revealed in these words is the truth that God is all-knowing and all-wise. God's words here also reveal how He wants to share His wisdom with us so that we can experience His good plans for us. It is so important when we find ourselves in new situations that we never forget to **seek God's advice before proceeding**. If we do, He will be sure to guide us down the right path that will be best for us. The wonderful thing about God is that He wants to be our guide throughout our lives. By walking with Him, reading His Word, and actively seeking His wisdom, we will not only maintain our bond with Him, but also be provided with His stable advice no matter what crisis or new situation we face.

After sharing with the couple, the advice their loved ones wanted to offer them, I then proceeded to give God's advice to them when it comes to marriage. The Bible offers many pieces of wisdom when it comes to marriage but the two I wanted them to hear were:

1. Marriage is God's gift to them.
2. The purpose of marriage in the Bible is oneness and unity.

While I imagine many of you reading this now are not about to get married soon, this advice from God also applies to our walk and relationship with Him. Just as the marriage relationship is a gift from God, shouldn't we see **our relationship with Him as a gift too**. Secondly, just as the goal of marriage is oneness and unity, if we **walk as one and united with the Lord** it is a blessed way to journey through life no matter what season, or new circumstance we might face.

Just like this couple, we too are journeying into some new and unfamiliar circumstances due to this on-going pandemic. As we do so, if we **actively seek the gift of God's advice**, and maintain our bond with Him, we will be able to **experience peace and stability** no matter what situations may arise.

God Bless and Keep Safe

Pastor Dean