

Hello. /We will begin the 6th lecture on the book of Ecclesiastes. /The title of chapter 5 is “Prudence.” /First, guard yourselves and listen to the word of God in his house. /Verse 1. /Second, guard your words and keep your vows. /Verses 2-7.

/Third, do not oppress the poor, but preserve justice. /Verses 8-9. /Fourth, there is no satisfaction even with abundant wealth. /Verses 10-12. /Fifth, do not protect your treasures at a loss. /Verses 13-17. /Sixth, man is destined to rejoice in his toil. /Verses 18-20.

/First, guard yourselves and listen to the word of God in his house.

/Verse 1. Let us read. /Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil.

/The verse says, “When you go to the house of God.” /This is speaking of a lifestyle that is intimate with God. /Therefore believers must work hard to enter the house of God. /When we enter his house, we give God joy.

/In his house, there is rest. /There is comfort. /There is strength and hope in God’s house. /Thus we must make the effort to enter his house.

/Then we will receive the great power and comfort that God gives to us. /It says, “Guard your steps.” /The verse is telling us to guard our actions. /It means to fear God. /The house of God is the place in which God dwells.

/We must recognize God /and be aware of him /as we humbly go before him. /God is not visible, but he exists. /Air is not visible, but air exists.

/Then is air more important or is food more important? //We can live for ten days without water. /If we do not take in the invisible air for three minutes, our brain cells start to become damaged. /After five minutes, we die.

/Then is what is seen more important or what is not seen? /What is not seen is important. /God is alive. /God is with us at this moment. /God is with us in our rooms, /our workplaces, /and anywhere we are in the world.

/We need to guard our steps when we enter God’s house. /No one should behave mindlessly in the house of God. /There are many people who behave thoughtlessly in God’s house.

/There are people who dance and go crazy in God’s temple, a place where we need to worship in spirit and in truth. /This is because they do not guard their steps. /We must guard our steps as we enter his house, and we must listen to his word.

/When we listen to his word, God rejoices. /In Luke 10:38, Jesus went to Mary's house. /Mary's sister Martha worked busily as she served Jesus.

/There was no one else to work, but Mary sat with Jesus and listened to him. /Martha was angry. /She said to Jesus, / "Tell Mary to help me."

/Then in Luke 10:41, Jesus says, / "Martha, Martha, /you are anxious and troubled /about many things, /but one thing is necessary. /Mary has chosen /the good portion, /which will not be taken away from her."

/Jesus was more delighted with Mary, who was longing for the word. /Today, there are many believers in the church who are like Martha. /Rather than receiving the word, /they are more busy serving.

/Then these people forget Jesus. /Who does Jesus like? He likes the one who seeks the word. /Therefore, when we go to the house of God, we must go with a heart that loves and seeks the word.

/The early church saw revival because the believers made great efforts to learn the word. /Acts 2:42 says, / "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching /and the fellowship, /to the breaking of bread /and the prayers."

/A church in which the believers receive the teachings of the apostles, /learn the Bible, /and love the word will experience great revival. /What church was the first church of the Gentiles? /it was the Church of Antioch.

/The Church of Antioch received the teachings of Paul and Barnabas. /That is how the Antioch Church saw great revival. /Their revival happened because they received the word of God.

/Revival in the early church was a result of properly listening to the word of God. /Therefore for us to see big revival, /we must listen well to God's word. /We must yearn for his word.

/Revival happens in that kind of church. /We must become people who are always longing for the word of God. /Psalm 107:9 says, / "For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with things."

/God leads those who long for the word down the path to eternity. /The words gives us power. /It becomes a sword. /When we have this sword, we are free, and we are able to defeat the devil. /But the fool offers sacrifices to God.

/God does not accept the sacrifices. /The verse says, "To draw near to listen is better than /to offer the sacrifice of fools." /The fool does evil and he does not know he is doing evil. /When we enter God's house, we need to guard ourselves.

/We need to recognize God. /We need to believe that he is a living God. /And we must immediately listen to his word. /We must long for it. /The person gave sacrifices in the house of God, but he is called a fool.

/Because he did not guard his steps /and because he did not long for the word, /he was giving foolish sacrifices. /He was only working hard in serving. /It became a sacrifice of evil. /The book of Isaiah talks about this.

/Isaiah 1:11 says, / “What to me /is the multitude of your sacrifices?” /says the LORD; /I have had enough /of burnt offerings of rams /and the fat of well-fed beasts; /I do not delight /in the blood of bulls, /or of lambs, /or of goats.”

/Here, God says, “I have had enough of the fat of well-fed beasts.” /God does not delight in these sacrifices. /Then, God says the following. /In Isaiah 1:12, he says, / “When you come to appear before me, /who has required of you /this trampling of my courts?”

/The believers trampled on the courts of his house. /They in no way had any relationship with God. /They offered to God a multitude of sacrifices, but God did not delight in them. /What does God accept? /The person entering the house of God must guard his steps.

/We need to long for the word of God. /God accepts the sacrifices of these people. /Now that we have come to realize this, let us fear God when we enter his house. /Believers! Long to hear the word of God.

/The fool offers sacrifices, but he does not realize. /In the United States of America, there was an immensely rich man by the name of Rockefeller. /His mother told him, / “You must do these three things to be blessed by God: / “Put your tithes in your right pocket. / Also, serve the church pastor as your father. /Sit in the front of the church.”

/Rockefeller did as his mother told him. /Later in life, God blessed him, and he became very wealthy. /Believers! I hope that in your longing for the word, you sit in the front seat of the church. /Be like Mary in listening to Jesus’s words as if they are dripping honey. /Then we will be filled with grace, the Holy Spirit, and faith.

/The second half of verse 1 says “They do not know.” /I hope that you become believers who do know. /Psalm 49:20 says, / “Man in his pomp yet without understanding is like the beasts that perish.”

/When we do not come to realization, the multitude of sacrifices we give are all meaningless. /I hope you realize the truth. /Matthew 13:23 says, / “As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. /He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one cast a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

/The one who understands plants his seed in good soil and bears good fruit. /Believers! Fear the Lord as you enter his house. /Guard your steps. /Hurry and listen to the word of

God. /Then you will be people who understand, and you will bear thirty times, sixty times, and one hundred times the fruit.

/Second, guard your words and keep your vows. /Verses 2-7.

/Verse 2. /Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few.

/The verse tells us to not let our hearts be hasty to utter a word before God. /It is telling us that we shouldn't claim before God that we could do something. /We should not be rash with our mouths.

/Here, it says that "God is in heaven and you are on earth." /When it says God is in heaven, the verse means that God plans and fulfills everything. /We on earth /cannot guarantee anything.

/Just because we plan something does not mean it will happen. /We cannot even make one hair grow or disappear. /Everything happens because God allows it to happen.

/Proverbs 16:1 says, / "The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD." /Also, Proverbs 16:9 says, / "The heart of man plans his way, /but the LORD establishes his steps."

/We cannot make one single hair turn white or turn black. /Therefore we should not be rash to speak. /A person's heart may plan, but God is the one who fulfills the plan.

/We must not speak rashly. /The all-powerful /and all-knowing God is the one who makes everything happen. /We must not be rash to make vows. /We must control our tongues.

/The blameless person says blameless things. /We must not speak carelessly.

/Our words will put us before the throne in the end of days. /In the last days, God will judge /the words that we had spoken wrongly.

/Therefore we must be careful with our words. /Matthew 12:36 says, / "I tell you, /on the day of judgment /people will give account for /every careless word they speak /for by your words you will be justified, /and by your words /you will be condemned."

/We will be judged on judgment day according to /the words that we speak. /We must not speak rashly. /There used to be a group leader at a church where I used to serve. /He was a man of good faith. /He worked hard for his group.

/A newly married woman in that group attended the church. /She had conceived a child. / This was when I was an assistant pastor. /The group leader came to me and said, / "Pastor! I prayed about the child, and it is certainly a boy."

/The woman heard this, and she found it very interesting. /But I thought to myself, “It will happen according to the will of God. How can we know?” /Then, ten months later, the woman gave birth to a child.

/Was it a boy or a girl? It was a girl. /The group leader could not say anything after that.

/Verse 2 says, “ /Be not rash with your mouth, /nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, /for God is in heaven /and you are on earth. /Therefore let your words be few.”

/Because God is in heaven, he operates things according to heaven’s plans. /We must not speak rashly. /We must always be blameless with our words.

/Verse 3. /For a dream comes with much business, and a fool's voice with many words.

/The verse says a dream comes with much business. /With many words come a fool’s voice. /If we work too much, we will even dream of working when we sleep. /This is a comparison with someone who talks a lot.

/Also, many words will bring forth a fool’s voice. /If people talk a lot, people see that person as a fool. /However, someone who does not speak much is seen as a wise person.

/The one who speaks empty words appears to be unreliable. /Proverbs 17:27 says, / “Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, /and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.” /The one who restrains his words has knowledge.

/Someone may be a fool, but if he saves his words, he appears to be a person of knowledge. /Therefore we must not speak rashly. /Proverbs 20:19 says, / “Whoever goes about /slandering reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with a simple babblers.”

/If you share secrets with someone who talks a lot, /your secret will be revealed to other people. /We specifically have to tell them not to tell the secret. /We must not speak rashly.

/We need to say what is necessary, /and not say what is unnecessary. /If we say what we should not say, /we will reveal other people’s secrets. /Proverbs 25:11 says /there are words that are fitly spoken. /These words are like “ apples of gold in a setting of silver.”

/We need to speak words that are fitting. /Then, our words will be like apples of gold in a setting of silver. /We need to be blameless people. /Our words need to be blameless.

/Verse 4. /When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow.

/If you have spoken rashly and have made a vow to God, /you must not delay in paying it. /We need to make an effort to pay what we vow. /If we cannot keep our vows, /it is better to make no vow.

/Verse 5. /It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.

/Not paying a vow is a greater sin. /It makes the flesh sin.

/Verse 6. /Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands?

/The verse reads, “Let not your mouth lead you into sin.” /If vows are not paid, the body becomes tired, and the person is punished. /Why does the body grow weary? /It is because of his words. /The person has made vows that he cannot keep.

/This person has made a promise to God that he could not keep. /Therefore, he has caused his body to sin. /The verse says “Let not your mouth lead you into sin.” /It also says, “Do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake.”

/The lips have sinned. /It is now saying that the vows were a mistake. /Thus God is angry at the work of the person’s hands. /We must not be rash in making vows before God.

/This does not mean that we shouldn’t ever make vows. /It is better for us to make vows than for us to not make vows. /Then how much effort do we put into paying our vows?

/We may come to a point where we pay our vows, or we may fail to pay them. /Because we do pay our vows, we are able to grow. /Our faith will grow. /So, it is better for us to make vows than to not make them.

/If we do not make vows, our faith is at a stoplight. /There is no progression in our faith. /The one who makes vows moves forward. /Now a new year has started. /I am sure many of you have made vows.

/You may have made vows saying you will bring ten people to church, /that you will pray without ceasing, /that you will be faithful this year. /The person who made the vow to evangelize will put in that much more effort in doing so. /The person who made the vow will work harder to pray.

/He will work harder to serve. /How wonderful is it to even bring five people to Christ? /God lifts up those who work hard for him. /If we pray with a purpose, God will listen to our prayers.

/When we make an effort to pray, God will give us strength. /If we make an effort to serve, God will give us strength. /Believers! Do not bury your talents in the ground, but work hard to trade your talents.

/Verse 7. /For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity; but God is the one you must fear.

/When dreams increase, there is vanity. /There is vanity when words grow many. /And the verse says that in conclusion, you must fear God. /When believers dream, they must fear God.

/When believers speak words, they must fear God. /What did verse 1 say about going into the house of God? We must guard our steps as we fear the Lord. /It means to listen to the word of God.

/What does this mean? /The verse is telling us not to say empty words and dream empty dreams. /The Bible is telling us to fear God and live successful lives as we listen to the word. /I hope that all of you will fear God.

/Believers! Do not dream meaningless dreams, but dream good dreams in God. /Jacob dreamed in God. /He had a dream when he was at Bethel. /Joseph also dreamed in God. /Eventually, his dreams all came true.

/We too must dream in the Lord. /I hope that you say words that are fitting before God. /You must not make vows that you cannot keep.

/Third, do not oppress the poor, but preserve justice. /Verses 8-9.

/Verse 8. /If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at the matter, for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them.

/In the city, there are those who oppress the poor. /In the court of law, those who are wealthy tend to win cases. /In this way, justice has been violated. /The verse tells us to not be amazed at this matter.

/Some rich people violate justice. When they oppress the poor, we should not think it weird. /This is because justice will certainly be upheld. /In this world, there is no justice.

/Normally, the wealthy and powerful survive. /The poor are oppressed, and they do not receive real comfort. /But the Bible says that /God is watching.

/Verse 8 says, "If you see... do not be amazed." /There is someone higher than /the powerful unrighteous people /and the people who ignore justice as they oppress the poor.

/The One who is Most High is watching everything. /There is someone greater than those who oppress the poor and those who are dishonest. /It means that God is there.

/A person may have great authority in this world, /but he too will stand before the judgment of God. /When God carries out his judgment, /he will punish those /who persecute the poor.

/Therefore we must fear God. /God is the highest being. /He is a just and righteous God. /He watches everything, and in the end, he will preserve justice.

/Verse 9. /But this is gain for a land in every way: a king committed to cultivated fields.

/The gains for land are for all people in this world. /The king also eats from the cultivated land. /God grants the farmers who cultivate the land the right to eat from the land. /He gave everyone the grace of being able to eat from the land.

/God is at the highest place. /Kings eat what God gives them to eat. /The farmers do the work, but it is God who gives them everything. /Proverbs 11:26 says, / “The people curse him /who holds back grain, /but a blessing is on the head of him who sells it.”

/After the farmer has produced grains, he must go out and sell them. /Then he will be blessed. /Because God is the Most High, he wants people to share what they have. /Verse 9 is saying that God is the Most High.

/God has given his grace to every person. /But to his chosen people, he has shown them special grace. /Believing in Jesus is a special grace and blessing. /But God gives the universal blessings, the blessings of nature, to everyone.

/Matthew 5:45 provides proof of this. /Does God give rain only to the farmers that are his chosen people? No, God pours down rain for everyone. /He gives everyone this universal blessing.

/What this means is that God is the owner of everything. /He is the highest of them all. /Therefore, God will judge with justice and righteousness. /Beloved believers! Are you being persecuted? /Are you being oppressed because you are poor?

/Does it feel like justice is gone? Do these things seem strange? /From now on, do not think it to be strange. /Even the kings eat what God has given them. /The farmers eat what God has given them.

/The just and righteous God will judge, comfort us, and dry our tears. /Matthew 5:45 says, / “So that you may be sons /of your Father who is in heaven. /For he /makes his sun rise /on the evil and on the good, /and sends rain /on the just and on the unjust.

/God sends the rains equally on the just and on the unjust. /We must not be amazed that there is injustice in the world.

Fourth, there is no satisfaction even with abundant wealth. /Verses 10-12.

/Verse 10. /He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.

/He who loves money will not be satisfied with money. /He who loves wealth with his income will be not satisfied with his income. /This is all vanity. /The heart that seeks wealth will pierce itself and lead the person down a path of destruction.

/We may continue to eat the things of the world, but we will always be hungry. /In the summer, it gets very hot. /We drink cold water to cool ourselves. /If we drink water once, do we not thirst again? /No, after a while, we become thirsty.

/Then we have to drink water again and again as we live. /The things of the world are temporary, so even if we consume the things of the world, we will become hungry for them again. /1 Timothy 6:10 says, / “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. / It is through this craving /that some have wandered away from the faith /and pierced themselves with many pangs.”

/Eventually, those who follow their greed will pierce themselves. /Those who love money will not be satisfied with money. /Who does it eventually pierce? /It will pierce the person himself. /Therefore we must not love money. /Money cannot give us true satisfaction.

/Verse 11. /When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes?

/What increases as our money increases? /While we manage the money, those who eat with us increase in number. /But all of this is nothing but observing with the eyes. /A person has filled his entire house with money.

/But is he going to use all of it for himself? /We can sit there looking at the money, but we give it to other people. /When we give what we have, there are more people with whom we can share and eat. /Verse 12 compares the laborer to someone who loves money.

/Verse 12. /Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

/When we are poor, we do not have to worry about thieves. /But when we are rich, we worry about thieves trying to steal our possessions. /If we have many possessions, we become anxious about protecting our assets. /To maintain our possessions, we become busy and tired.

/Fifth, do not protect your treasures at a loss. /Verses 13-17.

/The Preacher says he saw a grievous evil under the sun. /One’s possessions actually become harmful. /Your possessions cannot save you from disaster.

/Verse 14. /and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand.

/The riches are not passed down to the children. /Because we are naked when we come out of the womb, we are naked when we leave the earth.

/Verse 15. /As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand.

/Job 1:21 says, / “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return.”
/When we die, we cannot take anything from this world. /We may have possessed many things, but our lives are filled with anguish and sickness until the day we die.

/Verse 16. /This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind?

/Verse 17. /Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

/The person’s days passes by quickly. /Psalm 90:9-10.

/Sixth, man is destined to rejoice in his toil. /Verses 18-20. /Here, destiny is talking about one’s lot in this world. /Everything in this world is our lot.

Verse 18. /Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot.

/It is a beautiful thing when we enjoy pleasures through the work God has given us.
/First, we work in this world /to sustain our bodies. It is the work God has given us.

/Second, /we toil in order for our souls to grow. This is the work God has left us with.
/Third, /there is the work of preaching the gospel. /This is true pleasure.

/As verses 19-20 say, I hope that you rejoice in the pleasures that God has given to you. /
This means to work hard in the work of the flesh. /It also means working to grow our faiths. /Finally, we must work to spread the gospel. /In this way, I hope that you rejoice in the toil that God has given you.

/This ends the 6th lecture on the book of Ecclesiastes. /Thank you.