

Topics from Proverbs: The Fool - David Baumgartner

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[0:00] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church, Knowing Jesus, Making Jesus Known. While that handout is being distributed, I want to say, first of all, that God is good.

And all the time, He is. We're going to be continuing this morning our study in Proverbs. You may recall that Proverbs are these short, compact statements that express truth.

They're part of a collection known as the wisdom books, and they're written in the form of what we would consider Hebrew poetry. In other words, they use two lines, and they provide insight to us by making these comparisons.

There may be similarities. First, like something is like something else. Or there may be contrasts like light and darkness, righteousness versus evil.

Or there may be complementary statements. This is where the second statement builds onto the first. Since the book of Proverbs doesn't flow in any particular order, the best approach seems to be this topical approach, what we're doing now.

[1:19] And we've already looked at two topics. We looked at God and man. And then the last time we were together, we looked at wisdom. This morning, we're going to look at a third topic.

What does Proverbs say about wisdom and the fool and his folly? Man, why would we want to look at the fool and his folly?

Well, if you would consider the major theme in the book of Proverbs is wisdom, right? And so the opposite of wisdom is what?

Foolishness. And in fact, those words, fool and folly, they occur some 68 times in Proverbs. So there's really quite a lot to say.

And this morning, we're going to let the Proverbs speak for themselves. There's a lot of verses, and so you'll see them on your handout. And what we're going to see is first this morning, descriptions and illustrations of wisdom and of foolishness.

[2:21] And then this morning, we're going to end with a real-life application of wisdom. First, let's go ahead and go to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, we are grateful that we can come here today.

And boy, there's so much here to learn, to glean from your word about what pleases you. Thank you, Father, for these verses, and thank you for this time that we have.

May you be exalted in our midst today, Father, just as we consider all of who you are and what you've done for us. In Jesus' name, amen. I want to begin here with some key points that I think will help us in our understanding.

First of all, whether you're dealing with wise living or if you're dealing with foolishness, the behaviors that are described in Proverbs, they represent a pattern.

These are not one-time events. Patterns is what's saying here. Here's an example. A single error in judgment may not qualify a person to have that esteemed title as fool.

[3:30] No. We're looking for a pattern of behaviors here. Secondly, the behaviors that are described in Proverbs are not those of very young children, like maybe toddlers, nor do they describe adults with what we would call diminished mental capacity.

I think that's very important to understand. Third thing, the problems that are mentioned in Proverbs are moral in nature. In other words, a person is choosing between right and wrong, good and evil.

Let me give you an example. If somebody trips over a book and stumbles, what's going on? Well, there may be some momentary feelings of embarrassment.

There may be some feelings of foolishness. But stumbling in and of itself is not a moral issue. So you got that? It's good to know. First of all, or fourthly, I don't believe that it is for us as individuals to call other human beings fools.

I really don't think so. I'll give you a couple reasons. The first one is, after all, each one of us are prone to foolishness, aren't we? Yeah. Here's a verse here.

[4:52] Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but a rod of discipline drives it far from him. That's how deep folly is in us. It's bound up in us.

It's tied to, tied together as a string. Second reason is because of what Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus said in chapter 5, verse 22, I say to you, this is not on your handout, by the way, I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.

Whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council. And whoever says, you fool will be liable to the hell of fire. Now, the main point here is not whether or not a believer can lose his salvation and experience hellfire.

Rather, this is about attacking somebody's identity out of anger. Notice here in the verse, if you heard it, it's talking directly to the person and calling him a fool.

There's an intent to destroy or damage the person. So in reality, the question is this, who among us is righteous enough to call other people fools?

[6:09] Who is it? Well, God can. We may not call people fools, be able to, but God can. You and I may not have the moral authority to do that, but God certainly does.

And proverbs are statements. That what we see here that reveal his perspective on human behavior. And some of the proverbs we see, they explain what God desires to see in our lives. Other proverbs tell us what God doesn't want to see in our lives. And this he calls folly. And with that, let's look at some of these dimensions of foolishness.

And I would refer you to the handout here. There are several different Hebrew words that are translated in English as fool, foolishness, folly, and so on.

And each one distinguishes, or I should say highlights, a certain feature. And I'd like to look at just three this morning. The first classification is the naive who is gullible.

[7:16] That word naive occurs 14 times in Proverbs. Now this person is described as being simple-minded, immature. We may say a state of innocence in contrast to worldly wisdom.

And this by itself, friends, is not a problem. In fact, I believe that this is what Paul had in mind in his first letter to the Corinthians. He says, Let no man deceive himself.

If any man among you thinks he is wise in his age, get this. He says, Let him become foolish, that he may become wise. Well, here's the problem.

A naive person can be gullible. In other words, easily persuaded, and as such, become vulnerable to all sorts of evil people.

You may, in Proverbs, we see this father's plea to his young son. He says in Proverbs 1, verses 10, My son, he says, if sinners entice you, don't consent.

[8:28] In other words, son, don't follow the crowd. Don't get into mischief. Just to become one of the crowd. And if and when a simple person chooses folly, he becomes an outright fool.

Look at this verse in Proverbs 14, 18. The simple inherit. In other words, they take possession of folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

So what's the remedy here for the gullible person? Friends, it's prudence. As a verb, think of prudence as someone who's becoming sensible, someone who's gaining discernment.

And how does that happen? Well, in fact, the very goal of Proverbs itself is stated in verse 4, chapter 1, to give prudence to the simple and knowledge and discretion to the youth.

Notice in chapter 14 of Proverbs, the simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps. Proverbs 22, the prudent sees the evil and hides himself, but the naive go on and they're punished for it.

[9:48] So that's the first classification. Here's the second one. An outright fool. It just says it right here. This is actually the largest category in Proverbs.

It's used some 50 times. This is Proverbs 14. A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and careless.

The distinguishing feature here is that his or her folly or foolishness is actually a matter of choice. And it's usually manifested outwardly.

You might want to ask, well, how is that? Well, first, by his words. Look with me, Proverbs 18. A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only expresses or in expressing his opinion.

He gets pleasure in expressing his opinion. The tongue of the wise, Proverbs 15, makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools spouts folly.

[10:56] You may think of spouting. The word there is actually referring to like a spring or a well that just bubbles up folly. But not only in their words, foolishness is manifested in their actions.

Proverbs 13, 16. Every prudent man acts with knowledge, but a fool flaunts his folly. So we can ask the question here, is there a remedy for this person?

Well, friends, the remedy is doubtful because this person, you see, has no reverence for truth. Well, what's the third classification? It's the scoffer, the scorner.

That occurs some 17 times. This is what you would call a deliberate troublemaker. Look with me, Proverbs 21. Proud, haughty, scoffer are his names, who acts with insolent pride.

In other words, this person enjoys arguing. He enjoys strife. Proverbs 20 says, it is an honor for a man to keep aloof.

[12:05] In other words, keep a distance from strife. But every fool will be quarreling. Proverbs 29. If a wise man has an argument with a fool, the fool only rages and laughs.

There is no quiet. What's the remedy here? Well, unfortunately, the book of Proverbs is not very encouraging here. And that's because this person is virtually unable to change because they're unteachable.

Proverbs 27 says, if you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his folly will not depart from him. He says in Proverbs 13, a wise son accepts his father's discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

In Proverbs, this is referring to normally fathers are those who are depicted as wise and caring. But here, if you can't accept discipline from even your father, what hope is there?

Proverbs 9, do not reprove a scoffer or he will hate you. Reprove a wise man and he will love you. Proverbs 29, this is talking about the damage that's done to others by this person.

[13:22] It can be very extensive. Scoffers set a city aflame, but a wise man turns away from anger. This is really serious here. The devising of folly is sin, and a scoffer, get this, is an abomination to men.

Do you all get the seriousness here of what this is talking about? What can you do with a scoffer, a scorner? Well, in Proverbs 22, it says to drive out the scoffer and contention will go away.

Even strife and dishonor will cease. You may think about that in the context of a church. Proverbs 3 says, Toward the scornful, he, this is referring to God himself, is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.

What a blessing. Paul says the same thing, I believe, about this person in Titus 3. Paul says to reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

I know I'm going kind of fast here, friends, but this is how Proverbs describes wisdom as opposed to the fool and his foolishness.

[14:48] There's a few more categories that we could look at, but these are the biggest ones that are mentioned here. And as you can see, there's somewhat of a progression, or I may say regression, among these various descriptions here.

Greater and greater commitment to foolishness. I want you to consider, haven't most of us been exposed to troublemakers?

Yeah. The most antagonistic troublemaker that you know, consider this, was at one time an innocent little baby who was cooing perhaps at his mother, and grew up, and for some reason, became a mocker, a hater of God, a hater of authority, and everything that God has made that's good.

And you wonder, how did that happen? How did it? I think it's really sad here. I couldn't find any humorous illustrations because I just didn't feel like it.

It's sad because this person here, maybe we're talking about a family member, maybe talking about a mocker who's a friend, this person who's content to live without the Lord, a person who's content with no indwelling Holy Spirit, no word of God, no fellowship with God's people, no advocate to stand before our Heavenly Father and plead our cause.

[16:27] That's sad. We have to remember, Jesus himself interacted with lots of people who he himself was unable to convince.

Jesus, he talked with fools and about fools, and he describes them in a few ways. Look with me on your handout, Matthew 7. He says, he's talking about those who do not listen to his teaching. Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on a rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

Secondly, he's talking about those who trust in their own resources, their own wealth. He says in Luke 12, Jesus tells this parable of the land of the rich man produced plenty, he says.

And this rich man, he thought to himself, what should I do? And the rich man says, I'll say to my soul, soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years.

[17:38] Relax, eat, and drink, and be merry. And God said to him, you fool. He says, this night your soul is required of you.

Here's the third one. Those who do not live in the light of Jesus' eventual return. And to that, Jesus gave this, he said, the parable of the kingdom.

He says in Matthew 25, the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them, he says, are foolish and five were wise.

He goes on and he says, for when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took their flasks of oil with their lamps. Putting this all together here, what does it say?

It says, here are the characteristics of a wise person in God's eyes and these are the characteristics of a fool. Here's what a wise person does.

[18:40] Look with me on your handout. He or she seeks, hears, and applies God's word. This verse here, this is talking here about a person who is trusting in the person and in the work of Jesus Christ for his or her salvation.

There's a verse here in John 14 talking about the helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name. He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. In other words, this person knows that without the Lord Jesus, I'm on my own. I'm nothing. He knows that with Christ, my life can have meaning.

It can have purpose. Paul says in his letter to the Colossians, in Jesus in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Christ is the ultimate storehouse, friends, of wisdom, divine wisdom, knowledge. What a great Lord he is.

[19:51] Proverbs 2, 6, the Lord gives wisdom from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. So to him, to the wise person, the Bible becomes a sweet thing to drink.

It's refreshing. It gives life. Secondly, not only does the wise person seek and hear and apply God's word, he or she understands that all we are and all we possess comes from the Lord.

The fool looks at only the here and now and therefore is easily deceived, just like that farmer we read in the parable. I think I've done a pretty good job so far.

I think I'm just going to continue the way things are. But the wise person is teachable and walks in humility because it's all from God.

Peter says in chapter 5 of his epistle, all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another. For God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble.

[20:57] We also see that in James 2. Thirdly, and last, he or she lives in the light of Jesus' eventual return. what I'm talking about here is having an eternal perspective.

And as such, if I'm speaking to you, hasn't your priorities changed in life? Haven't they? Haven't you realigned what you value according to God's values?

Paul says, so then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. the wise person is concerned about the Lord's will and sees folly for just what it is.

Paul here says in Galatians, walk by the Spirit, friends, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. So, great illustrations here, a great picture of what is foolishness and what's wisdom.

And I promise that we have a real life example of someone wise. And in a minute, I'm going to call up Noah Agnew. He's going to come up and share with us. Noah met with the elders several times, and he told us what he believed that God had placed on his heart.

[22:22] And so we listened to him. And it seemed to the elders that it's fitting that he would come up and share with us, and also that our church would commend him because he's getting into full-time ministry, and we want to back him.

We want to see, here's a young man, he wants to walk by faith, and he wants to depend upon God, and he wants to see God do wonderful things in people's lives, and not only see it, he wants to be part of it.

Come on up, Noah. He wants to be part of it. And so brothers and sisters, this is our chance to get behind someone and encourage their ministry, not only through prayers, but through our financial support and other ways that we can encourage Noah.

So let me go ahead and pray, and then I'll turn it over here. Heavenly Father, we thank you so much that you have given us these, just these accurate depictions of what it is that please you.

how we can walk in this world pleasing to you, and you have provided everything we need to do that. And Lord, all the promises that we have in Christ, we thank you for them.

[23:40] In Christ's name, amen. Can you all hear me all right?

It's interesting. You know, as he said at the last point, how God changes our priorities. When I was 12 years old, I didn't even think I would make it to college.

If you know my family situation, we were kind of poor. I didn't even think I would make it to college, so I didn't think anything would happen. At around 15 years old, I had decided, the Lord had provided for me to be able to go to public school, and it looked like I would maybe be able to go to college if I worked really hard for it.

And I decided that I was going to work in a job where I would make a buttload of money and then I would be able to pay back everybody that had ever helped me in my life. I would be able to take them out to dinner whenever they wanted because they fed me a lot.

I knew that. And I would be able to do anything that they wanted. The Lord had a completely different path for my life when I turned 18. When I turned 15, I remember the specific moment.

[24:51] I was at camp, and we went out to Jefferson City, and we were preaching the gospel just around the 4th of July parade thing, festival that they had.

And I was new to Turkey Hill, and I was new kind of like discovering my faith, making it my own. And I remember this one specific moment of I was walking down the street, and there was a man sitting in his backyard.

And I'm going to say this first. I have two goals today. One is to convey clearly what the Lord has laid on my heart, and the other one is to try not to cry. I'm already about to do that. Anyway, I was walking down the street, and I saw this man sitting on a porch swing, and I knew that I should have gone up to him, and I should have shared the gospel with him.

But I was scared, and I was nervous, and I walked past. That night, I couldn't sleep at all because of that one man that I didn't share the gospel with. And that night, I woke up our head counselor, and he sat down with me, and we prayed, and that night I dedicated myself to the Lord like I was going to do his work, no matter what it was.

That came in many different forms. I had prayed that next year at high school that if the Lord gave me an opportunity to share the gospel, I would. That's a dangerous prayer to pray if you do not mean it. I had more opportunities to share the gospel in high school than, I don't know, it was a lot.

[26:13] I remember one time actually being able to get up in front of my entire geometry class and share the whole gospel to them with the teacher present, which is kind of unheard of now. But anyway, fast forward now to 18, 18 years old.

The Lord had laid on my heart that I want to work into full-time ministry. Now, I didn't say anything to anybody. I wanted to pray about it, and I wanted this to be between me and the Lord.

Lord, if it was going to happen, I wanted it to be fully from the Lord. That summer, I went to camp, and people started coming up to me saying, hey, have you ever thought about being a director at camp?

Have you ever thought about working here full-time, specifically at Turkey Hill? Have you ever thought about going into the mission field? So after that summer, I kind of was realizing, okay, the Lord does have something for me.

I just need to figure out what it was. Quite a few people actually did come up to me and say, have you ever thought about working at Turkey Hill specifically for full-time ministry work?

[27:18] So kind of in the middle of the summer, I brought it to Jimmy Allen. I said, hey, this is what the Lord, I feel like, is leading towards. What do you think? What is seeking his wisdom?

He was ecstatic. He was excited. If you guys know, Jimmy has poured a lot into my life through camp. And so he was excited to see that this was my desire.

He told me again to continue to pray about it. And if at the end of the summer, if I still felt this way about it, to go talk to Micah Williams. And I just want to share a couple of verses.

I know the one verse that a lot of people use is Matthew 28, 18 through 25, and saying that, you know, Great Commission, go and make disciples of all nations.

But that really wasn't the verse that motivated me to go out and do the Lord's work. Obviously, it is a motivation, it's what the Lord commanded us. But the real verse that motivated me was in Romans 1, verses 19 through 20.

[28:21] It says, Since what has been made known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

And the reason why that verse motivated me is because I don't want to get up to heaven and somebody say, in the judgment seat, say, well, Noah Agnew didn't share the gospel with me. I don't want to be somebody's excuse. Now, obviously, there's other verses that say, you know, men are without excuse because of God's creation and all that other stuff. But I don't want somebody to be up there saying that it was because of this man, Noah Agnew, that I didn't know the Lord.

So that was the verse that motivated me to share the gospel and want to go into full-time ministry. So after the end of the summer, I talked to Micah. He was ecstatic as well.

He cautioned me because as people that go to camp know, you can kind of get the camp high, you know, spiritual life. You want to do it, but sometimes it doesn't exactly work out all that well.

[29:30] But Micah told me to continue to pray about it. He said, I would give it to December. If this is still your desire, I would start to set up a meeting with your elders and see what they say about it.

And if you know me, I'm not a very patient guy. And I'm just going to tell you now, this took a five-year-long process. It's 20, I'm 22 now, and I'm finally down there. So this was not at all part of my character of waiting this long to get something done.

They don't teach you that in school either when you're looking for a job. They tell you to be very, very proactive about it. But month after month, meeting after meeting, after I met with people who I respected, who I loved, and who were giving me wisdom, at the very end of those conversations, the next thing they would say is, we'll pray about it some more, see where the Lord leads you.

And I was like, oh, more praying, okay. So anyway, six months later, about December, I met with the elders for the first time and conveyed this desire and what I felt that the Lord was putting on my heart.

Um, and they, they, I left that meeting. I was very encouraged. I hope that they were encouraged as well. Um, again, they said, why don't you continue praying about it and we'll see where the Lord takes you from there.

[30:44] I guess from that point on, uh, I really just was praying about it and seeking after it, kind of just waiting and seeing and the Lord brought about trials and hardship with school and finances and everything like that, but he never shut the door, uh, to working at camp.

I'd say the, the turning point in where I knew that camp could possibly be a reality, um, was in 2017, Memorial Day and the reason why I know that is because it was an expensive turning point in my life.

So, in 2017, I started an internship down at New Madrid at a power plant and the Lord provided finances for me to buy a new car because mine was junk.

So, uh, I had gotten this new car and I was driving down to my fiance's house for Memorial Day weekend, hanging out with them, had a great time. I was coming back and I was like, you know what, maybe I'll stop at camp and say hi to everybody because I was driving past them.

I was like, no, you know what, it's a long drive, I'm gonna go home and just relax. Around Jefferson City, little Bambi decided to run out in front of my car and smash the front end of my brand new car.

[31:57] So, not only had I paid to just get this car, now I have to pay again. Well, I was really depressed and I was like, man, this sucks. So, I decided to go to camp after I got everything sorted out.

Well, it had been on my mind for a while there that I was like, okay, I think it's time for me to fill out a full-time staff application there. And I was going to, as I was down there, I was like, well, might as well ask them about it, what they think, what Micah and Jimmy and all of them thought about me filling out the staff application.

And so, I told Jimmy as we're sitting down eating dinner, and he's like, that's really funny because Micah just told us that he's leaving for California within the next year or so. It was really interesting to see that the Lord's timing worked out perfectly.

And all those people that said just wait a little longer, pray more, it really came to light that moment. That they, the timing of the Lord and who he was bringing in and who was leaving camp, it was just all his timing.

And the expensive part was, is that my car obviously was destroyed. But, it was a good, a good wake up call that the Lord was showing me, hey, this is why I had you wait this long. So, I was ecstatic, I was excited, and I think I printed off the application that day and started filling it out.

[33:18] Again, I had called Steve Price, who's the president of the board, had talked to him multiple times, and he had asked me to talk to the elders again, you know, just keep making sure that everything was where, you know, the elders were in line with it and all that other stuff.

I'll say throughout this entire process, there was only one point pursuing camp that I ever felt distraught about it, that maybe this wasn't where I was supposed to go. And I look back at it now and say, okay, that was, you know, kind of a hump that I had to get over.

I'm getting a little bit off track, sorry. So, I filled out the staff application. The board members called me sometime after, and they were like, we want to interview you.

We want to interview you, Jeremy Barker, and Lacey, my fiance, who also wants to do the work down at camp. And it was a really weird interview, and I say weird in a good way, because normally in a job interview, I'm really nervous.

You know, you want to get that job. But I, at this interview, it was different, and I think Colossians chapter 3, verses 15 through 17 really convey why I was at such peace with this.

[34:38] It says, Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you are called to peace, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, whatever in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. And I think that's why I had so much peace, is because I

wasn't asking for them to give me anything.

I was just conveying, saying, hey, this is where I feel that the Lord is leading me. What do you guys think? I know that it was not outside the Lord's will, so I knew it wasn't wrong, or I was asking for anything that was above what I was supposed to do.

And these men that I sat down with, I consider them spiritual giants, along with among you. And it was just an honor to sit down with them, ask for their wisdom and their guidance, and see where to go with the next step.

So I sat down in the interview, and the interview went great. And we talked, and I asked them to continue to pray for me. And if they did come to a decision of that, no, this isn't where you want me to be, the board members thought that it wasn't the place for me, that I would continue to pursue finding some other full-time ministry.

[36:02] And they asked them, about when would I hear from them about an answer? I didn't think that was outside of the realm of a question that I should ask. They were like, oh, well, we'll get back to you, we'll try to get back to you in February.

Now, my experience with the Turkey Hill board members is that don't move fast. So I was expecting to hear from them in May. Anyway, so we fast forward a little bit of time. The interview happened in December.

Mid-January, I was actually with my mom, and she was over at the house, and I looked down at my phone, and Steve Price is calling me. And I was like, oh, what is this about?

Maybe they want a second interview. Maybe they want to talk about some other things. And I answered the phone, and I was like, hello, this is Noah Agnew. And he's like, hey, this is Dr. Price. And he was super calm about it.

And he said, we would like to extend the invitation for you to come down as full-time staff on Turkey Hill. From that point on, I don't think I heard another word that he said. I started to cry a little bit.

[37:03] My mom was there, and I was excited. And all I could say to him was, thank you. Thank you so much. Praise God. Thank you so much. And he was like, are you excited? And I was like, yeah, it's really hard to keep it calm on the phone right now.

And so he's like, all right, well, I'm going to call Lacey next, because we're going to accept Lacey and Jeremy as well. The funny thing is, is Lacey and I are engaged at this point, and we talk about everything.

And this is something that we had been going through together. Lacey was actually over in Israel. And the time zone is about a 12-hour difference. So she was already in bed. And I was like, you're going to make me wait 24 hours to tell my fiance that we both got accepted?

It was killing me. Anyway, so I got off the phone. I was crying. My mom was there. And I was super excited. It was an amazing, amazing thing to get the final yes.

And in the back of your mind, while you're praying for something like this, you're always thinking, OK, Lord, help me be vigilant in seeking that maybe this isn't where you want me to be.

[38:09] Help me not to force this. But to get that final yes from the board members, I knew then that this is where the Lord wants me.

This is the place that I'm supposed to be right now. And that's just incredible. And I think it's a huge testimony with Micah and Christina actually moving to California.

They believe that the Lord is calling them to a different work. And beforehand, I had kind of had my mind set on Turkey Hill up until I heard that they were leaving for California for a different work.

They felt that the Lord was like they were done with that camp and that the Lord had them somewhere else. And so my prayer has been, Lord, I'm glad that I'm here at Turkey Hill for this time, but help me to remain vigilant about other opportunities.

Maybe this is where you need me for a year. Maybe it's where I'm going to be for the next 50 years. So that's actually a prayer request, you know, that the Lord just keeps me vigilant about that.

[39:12] I actually moved down Thursday, this Thursday, this past Thursday. I was supposed to move down Wednesday. But we were packing up and Mom said, well, why don't we just move you down Thursday?

And I was like, okay. So we got there at like 9 o'clock at night, unloaded, and they didn't waste any time putting me to work because I got there at 9 o'clock at night. At 10 o'clock, I was part of the

group text message that they talk about all the work.

And they told me I was working tomorrow. And I was like, okay. So it's been an amazing journey. A lot of, and this is the part where I may cry, I just want to say thank you to my church family.

You guys know what you did in my life. And, I mean, I could stand up here for the next couple of hours and say, all of you, let's stop by names, things that you've done for me, things that you've done for my family, how much you've fed me.

Because I know I ate a lot of your food. So I just want to say thank you to all of that, to youth group, to people that taught me in Sunday school. It's just amazing.

[40:29] I would not be up here today pursuing this if it wasn't for you guys. So thank you for that. It's amazing.

It's been really beautiful what the Lord has done in my life. You know the trials that I've been through and just all the things that I thought would never end and that I didn't see a purpose to. And they're all coming together now. And it's just crazy awesome. So, yeah, thank you again and everything. I'm going to stop crying for you in a second.

Just a couple of prayer requests that I have for being down at camp. As most of you know, that camp is not, we won't go out and raise support directly financially.

We faith-base it, prayer. And I think that the Lord will bring about amazing stories and amazing testimonies that way. And so I'm super excited about that. But as a prayer request that the Lord would provide financially, physically, and spiritually.

[41:41] All of those things are what I need. Like I said, they didn't waste any time. And by day one, I was already tired. So I need physical strength as well as spiritual strength.

As the summer comes closer, there will be spiritual battles fought then. I am starting off a marriage soon. And this is an interesting situation. It was really interesting for me to go up to Lacey's dad and say, hey, can I marry your daughter?

And we're going to go into full-time ministry, so I won't have a guaranteed paycheck. That was an interesting conversation. They're supportive. Don't worry. They're very supportive of it. But, yeah, starting off a new marriage along with this career, just learning how the Lord wants us to move about it and everything like that.

Another one is just transitioning. There's a lot of new people coming in. And the board members have never brought in this many new people at one time. myself, Jeremy Barker, Lacey Fitzpatrick. And then Jeremy's going to get married soon, so his future wife. And then also Jimmy Fitz. So just as transitioning and, you know, figuring out where our niche is and all that stuff, just pray that that's smooth.

[42:52] And also for this summer, being our first summer on full-time staff, that it would be a fruitful summer, not only in just souls saved, but the people that we disciple.

And just a fruitful summer for us to grow in this ministry and to see the Lord's work in that. So, again, just thank you. I didn't accomplish one of the goals of not crying, but that's okay.

One of the leaders, I'm afraid for you. Do you have a couple questions? Yeah, sorry. I forgot to mention it. Does anybody have any questions? Because I know, like, I've tried to keep you updated. What would your actual role be as your team?

So right now for the summer, I am going to be basically the head of stable crew down there. So my main purpose is going to be working with Jimmy Allen in the horse program, you know, breaking horses, training them.

And during the off-season, pretty much everybody kind of helps with all the projects. But, again, my main purpose will be to help with the horse program. So. How many horses?

[44:03] A lot. 50 head of horses with babies on the way. So, yeah, he told me that yesterday. He's like, hey, all of our mares are pregnant. And I was like, that's a lot of work. Okay. Okay.

I beg you. I am. Come. I am. See you.

Yeah. I am. I love you. No, no, no. No, I am. I am. Yeah. Yeah. I was like, I am. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.