

Over the years I have watched people struggle unnecessarily or cause themselves and others problems because they lacked the ability to maneuver in human relationships/evangelism/follow-up or ministry. Jesus instruction: BE wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

## **I. THE REALITY OF OPPOSITION**

### **A. Jesus is preparing his workers for their mission**

1. He gives the understanding of opposition: People will resist you/fight against you
  - a. *V16 Sheep in the midst of wolves...*they will try and consume you/your mission
  1. Demonic opposition moving through people/motivating or energizing people

### **B. The great need is for wisdom!!**

1. **V16 Behold! Pay special attention to...Use your head/common sense/wisdom**

*a. Col. 4:5 "Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time The Message, "Use your heads as you live and work among outsiders. Don't miss a trick. Make the most of every opportunity. "*

1. Wisdom makes life easier: Lack of wisdom makes life harder

### **2. Some questions of wisdom:**

- a. *What are you trying to achieve?* b. *What motivates this person?* c. *Is this the correct time?*

### **C. Jesus is dealing with an incorrect or unwise approach to life**

1. There is only 1 way to deal with situations: Fight!! Straight ahead/right & wrong

- a. Samaritans: let's call down fire! b. Malchus: Chop his ear off!

2. This kind of person usually struggles in life

- a. They cause unnecessary offense b. They lose opportunities

- c. They damage people by their approach

1. *Malchus' ear chopped off: Now he can't hear Jesus*

## **II. STRATEGIES OF WISDOM**

### **A. Jesus gives an overall strategy of wisdom: *V16 wise as serpents and harmless as doves***

#### **1. Harmless as doves: Try to appear inoffensive**

- a. Outreaches: You don't give the entire Gospel message when you're trying to open a door

1. *We want to tell people they're going to fry in hell if they don't repent vs. trying to help the community...*

- a. *Lack of wisdom: We have to tell the truth, brother... and only be able to reach 2 people vs. hundreds/thousands*

2. *Rehab outreach: Testifying/blasting rehabs with managers/people in charge there; Closed doors*

#### **2. Wise as serpents: Knowing how to maneuver**

- a. A snake knows how to pick its fights: Sometimes it would rather avoid trouble than strike

1. *What motivates this person? Ego? Money? Pressure from others/higher-ups?*

- b. Try and maneuver/get around this person/problem or issue **for the greater good!!**

1. *Police/officials are pressured/ego-driven: Respond with respect and try to avoid them... No problem/thanks for telling*

- a. *Pastoring – Code enforcement officer: We avoided/maneuvered for years before we had to fight!*

- c. This is true in dealing with new converts: You have to have the wisdom to maneuver

1. A timing issue: They might not be ready for it yet!

- a. *1 Corinthians 3:2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it...*

- b. *So maneuver: MH what about booze? When God wants you to give it up, He'll tell you...*

### **B. These are heart issues**

1. Wise: Not usual word (Sophos) but phronimos: To rein in or to curb

- a. We must rein in our egos so we can rein in our mouths!

## **III. THE GREATEST NEED**

### **A. The greatest need in life is wisdom**

1. There are a multitude of areas that we all lack wisdom

- a. Because we have been foolish b. Because we face situations we have no experience with

- c. Because it requires sensitivity: Now? What to say? It must be sensed or felt sometimes

2. The answer is to ask God for wisdom & seek wisdom

- a. *James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

- b. *Proverbs 2:1-4 My child, listen to what I say and remember what I command you. Listen carefully to wisdom; set your mind on understanding. Cry out for wisdom, and beg for understanding. Search for it like silver, and hunt for it like hidden treasure.*