

Proverbs 4:11 (NLT2)

I will teach you wisdom's ways and lead you in straight paths.

Last week it was my middle son's 18th birthday, and for his birthday he wanted to go bowling, so that's what we did. Now, we haven't gone bowling for several years, so you could imagine how bad we all did, except for my older son, who is 40. He is into all kinds of sports, and even though he is not big into bowling, he is still pretty good at it.

My youngest son, who is 16, was pretty bad at it though, so bad that he was throwing a lot of gutter balls, and you could tell that he was getting frustrated, as well as embarrassed. Well my older son decided to stop and take some extra time to teach him how to bowl properly. He showed him how to hold the ball, how many steps to take, how to swing his arm back correctly and how to throw the ball straight.

Now my youngest son could have said to his big brother, "*Hey, don't judge me. I know what I am doing.*" But he didn't. In fact he appreciated his brother helping him out, and as he followed his brother's instructions, he did a lot better.

Yet how many times do we see others trying to help us and think that they are actually trying to judge us? This world has gotten things so upside-down and backwards, even the bible said it would be like this.

† **Isaiah 5:20** *Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

Yet, we as Christians have fallen into that same trap. And we love saying or thinking, "*Hey don't judge me or you'll be judged*" or "*you have no right to judge me*".

Back in the day, we never would use that saying or even think that someone was judging us, we were taught that when someone tells you something that we should use it as a learning opportunity, especially when it's someone older. But even when it wasn't someone older, we still listened to what we were being told, and learned from it. But not now, people are so quick to pull out their phone and "Google it" or see if they can find an app for it. And are so quick to trust what's on their phone and the internet, then to listen to wisdom from an actual person.

† **Proverbs 5:1 (NLT2)** *My son, pay attention to my wisdom; listen carefully to my wise counsel.* (underlined for emphasis)

In this Proverb, I can see something we all think when we are trying to teach someone something and they are too busy staring at their phone instead, and that is, "*pay attention*". Even in church we see this as people are on their phones while the pastor is teaching. Sure some use their phones because they have the bible app on it, But the bible app does not have shoes on sale and Target,

or social media to be looking at. It's time for us a Christians to "*pay attention to my wisdom; listen carefully to my wise counsel.*"

Even Jesus said, ***He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*** **Matthew 11:15**

Even today, Jesus would not say, "he who has a phone, Google it", because wise counsel is not something that you will get on your phone or from TV or a movie or social media (Unless it's scripture posted). We have even gotten to the point where church is online, so the mindset is I don't have to be there. There is no wisdom in that. Laziness...Yes, but wisdom...No. I believe that watching church online instead of going to church is a slow path down the road called Backslidden Alley.

So it's time for us all to put the phone down, and start listening to those who are instructing us, and stop thinking that he or she is judging us, and actually listen to what they are saying and applying and learning from it.

- † **Mark 7:14 (NLT2)** *Then Jesus called to the crowd to come and hear. "All of you listen," he said, "and try to understand."*
- † **Zechariah 1:4 (NLT2)** *Don't be like your ancestors who would not listen or pay attention when the earlier prophets said to them, 'This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: Turn from your evil ways, and stop all your evil practices.'*
- † **Proverbs 22:17 (NLT2)** *Listen to the words of the wise; apply your heart to my instruction.*