

Study Guide-Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

1. Share your initial thoughts and impressions from the message.
2. Read verses 1-3.
 - a. "Guard your steps..." (v.1a). Discuss, "*The direction of your feet determines your destiny.*" See also Psalm 27:4
 - b. Stand in awe! What does it mean to you that you are able to enter the throne room of God?
 - c. Listen first! Discuss, "Prayer should be worship-based, Spirit-led and Scripture-fed."
 - d. Be centered (v.3). How can you cut out some of the unnecessary distractions around you?
3. Read verses 4-6. What are examples of people making rash vows? What is the difference between feeling-based and principle-based living?
4. According to verse 7, "Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore fear God." What does it mean to fear God? What do verses 1-6 have to say about that?

For Reflection & Prayer

1. How does your life reflect the fear of God?
2. How can you improve the way you approach God?
3. How can you become more principle-based and less feeling-based in the way you live and make decisions?

Message Slides

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I. Approaching God (1-3)

"Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. Do not be quick with your mouth; do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. A dream comes when there are many cares, and many words mark the speech of a fool."

A. Guard your steps (1a)

"Guard your steps..."

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Psalm 27:4- "One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple."

B. Stand in Awe (1a)

"Guard your steps when you go to the house of God..."

C. Listen first (1b-2)

"Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few."

D. Be Centered (v.3)

"A dream comes when there are many cares, and many words mark the speech of a fool."

II. Making Vows (v.4-7)

"When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore fear God."

Reflection Time

1. How well do you listen in prayer?

2. What can help prepare your heart for prayers?
3. How have you tried to manipulate God?
4. Do you have any vows you need to take back?
5. How does your life reflect the awe of God?