



SUNDAY SCHOOL AUGUST 17, 2025

Prayer:

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Old Testament

Isaiah 5:1-7

THE SONG OF THE UNFRUITFUL VINEYARD

(God is portrayed as the Vineyard Owner)

I will sing for my beloved
my love song concerning his vineyard:

My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

He dug it and cleared it of stones
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded rotten grapes.

And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.

What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?

When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield rotten grapes?

And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;

I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.

I will make it a wasteland;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briers and thorns;

I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are his cherished garden;

he expected justice
but saw bloodshed;
righteousness
but heard a cry!



OVERVIEW

Isaiah 5:1–7 is often referred to as the **Song of the Vineyard**. It is a poetic allegory where God is portrayed as a vineyard owner who lovingly prepares and tends a vineyard (representing Israel and Judah). Despite the care given, the vineyard produces only bad fruit (symbolizing injustice and unrighteousness). The passage concludes with God’s judgment—removing protection, allowing it to be overrun, and withholding rain—reflecting divine consequences for moral and spiritual failure.

BIBLICAL CONTEXT

- **Placement in Isaiah** – This passage comes early in Isaiah’s prophecy, setting the tone for his warnings to Judah and Jerusalem. It follows Isaiah’s vision and call to prophetic ministry in chapters 1–4, where he confronts corruption, idolatry, and oppression.
- **Imagery of the Vineyard** – Vineyards were common in ancient Israel and a frequent metaphor for God’s relationship with His people (Psalm 80:8–16; Jeremiah 2:21; John 15:1–8).
- **The “Song” Style** – The passage begins as if it were a love song (“Let me sing for my beloved”) but shifts dramatically into a lament, heightening the emotional weight of God’s disappointment.
- **Moral Focus** – The “bad fruit” is defined as *bloodshed* instead of *justice*, and *cries of distress* instead of *righteousness*. These words were core covenant values rooted in Torah law.

HISTORICAL / NON-BIBLICAL / POLITICAL CONTEXT

- **Economic Inequality** – Eighth-century BCE Judah was experiencing wealth accumulation by elites, land-grabbing from small farmers, and neglect of the poor—issues Isaiah repeatedly denounces.
- **Political Turbulence** – Judah lived in the shadow of the growing Assyrian Empire, which would soon dominate the region. Leaders often relied on political alliances instead of trusting God.
- **Religious Corruption** – Worship at the temple continued, but rituals masked deep moral decay. Many leaders saw prosperity as divine favor, ignoring injustice and idolatry.
- **Agricultural Parable Resonance** – Everyone in Isaiah’s audience would understand the painstaking work of vineyard cultivation—terracing hillsides, clearing stones, planting choice vines. This made the metaphor personally convicting.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE / BIBLICAL TIMEFRAME

- **Approx. 740–700 BCE** – Likely during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and early Hezekiah.
- **Pre-Assyrian Invasion** – This prophecy warns of judgment before Assyria’s eventual devastation of the northern kingdom (Israel in 722 BCE) and its threats to Judah.
- **Contemporary Prophets** – Hosea, Amos, and Micah also condemned injustice using agricultural imagery during this same general era.

SCHOLARLY METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATION WITH MODERN-DAY & GRANT COUNTY CONTEXT

- **Metaphorical Reading** – The vineyard represents a people blessed with opportunity and care—given all they need to flourish spiritually, socially, and morally. The “bad fruit” symbolizes systemic injustice, moral decay, and neglect of covenantal responsibilities.
- **Shift from Love Song to Indictment** – This change mirrors how communities sometimes mistake God’s blessings as a sign that “all is well,” even as they drift from His values.
- **Warning and Hope** – The tearing down of the vineyard is not just punishment—it is also a wake-up call to turn back before the foundation is lost.
- **Modern Application**



- In **Grant County**, the “vineyard” could represent the network of churches, traditions, community programs, and social trust that have been cultivated over generations.
- The question Isaiah raises is: **Are we producing the fruit God intended?**
 - *Justice*: How are we treating the marginalized—those struggling with housing, addiction, job loss?
 - *Righteousness*: Are our institutions and personal relationships marked by integrity, or by favoritism and distrust?
- Like Isaiah’s Judah, we might maintain outward signs of religion (services, festivals, traditions) while internally harboring division, exclusion, or apathy.

SUMMARY

Isaiah 5:1–7 is a prophetic parable in which God, as the vineyard owner, pours out love, care, and provision on His people, expecting a harvest of justice and righteousness. Instead, He finds violence and cries of distress. This passage, set in a time of social inequality and political instability, uses familiar agricultural imagery to deliver a piercing moral warning. For today’s audience—especially in places like Grant County—the question remains the same: with all the blessings we’ve been given, are we producing the kind of fruit God desires, or have we mistaken religious form for faithful substance?



New Testament

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

THE FAITH OF OTHER ISRAELITE HEROES & THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

(Written to the Jewish Hebrew Christians)

By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered mocking and flogging and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death; they were sawn in two; they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground.

Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

OVERVIEW

Hebrews 11:29–12:2 bridges the climax of the “Faith Hall of Fame” with an exhortation (emphatically urging those) to endure in the Christian life. The passage begins by recalling acts of faith—crossing the Red Sea, the fall of Jericho, Rahab’s courage, and unnamed heroes who triumphed through trust in God. The tone shifts to those who suffered and died for their faith, introducing the “cloud of witnesses” in chapter 12. The writer then urges readers to run the race set before them, fixing their eyes on Jesus, the “pioneer and perfecter” of faith, who endured the cross for the joy ahead.

This section is both **inspirational** (drawing courage from past believers) and **practical** (calling for perseverance, focus, and endurance in the present struggle).

See Addendum “Faith Heroes”

BIBLICAL CONTEXT

- **Placement in Hebrews:** This is the conclusion of the great “faith” chapter (Hebrews 11) and the transition into exhortations in Hebrews 12. Hebrews is written to believers tempted to abandon the faith under pressure, reminding them of God’s faithfulness.
- **Audience:** Jewish Christians facing persecution, social isolation, and a pull back to familiar Jewish traditions.
- **Key Themes:**



- **Faith in Action** – The acts listed are not passive belief but active obedience in difficult circumstances.
- **Witnesses** – The saints of the past are like spectators in a stadium, encouraging perseverance.
- **Endurance** – Perseverance is linked with Jesus' own example.
- **Christ as Model** – He both begins and completes faith; believers follow His pattern.

HISTORICAL / NON-BIBLICAL / POLITICAL CONTEXT

- **Red Sea Crossing (Exodus 14)** – The Israelites' escape from Egypt was not just spiritual but political, as they were liberated from a superpower's control.
- **Jericho's Fall (Joshua 6)** – Military conquest attributed to faith and obedience rather than military might.
- **Rahab (Joshua 2)** – A marginalized Canaanite woman, a non-Israelite, yet honored for protecting God's people.
- **Unnamed Heroes & Martyrs** – Likely references to Judges (Gideon, Barak, Samson), Kings (David), prophets (Elijah, Elisha), and intertestamental martyrs (Maccabean revolt against Seleucid oppression ~167–160 BCE).
- **First-Century Persecution** – The original readers of Hebrews likely lived under Roman rule where Christianity was increasingly seen as disruptive. They may have faced confiscation of property (Hebrews 10:34), imprisonment, and social ostracism.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE / BIBLICAL TIMEFRAME

- **Anonymous Writer:** Early church in the West (Rome, North Africa) often listed Hebrews as anonymous, while the East tended to attribute it to Paul until around the 4th century, when the debate became more balanced.
- **Writing of Hebrews:** Likely before 70 CE (Temple still referenced in present tense), possibly mid-60s CE, during rising tensions before the Jewish-Roman War.
- **Events Referenced in Hebrews 11:29–38:**
 - ~1446 BCE – Crossing of the Red Sea (traditional early Exodus dating).
 - ~1400 BCE – Fall of Jericho.
 - 12th–10th centuries BCE – Judges and early kings.
 - 9th–8th centuries BCE – Prophets endure persecution.
 - 2nd century BCE – Maccabean martyrs under Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

SCHOLARLY METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATION WITH MODERN-DAY & GRANT COUNTY CONTEXT

Tom to Read

- **Race as Life of Faith:** The metaphor of running a race still resonates. It's not a sprint but a marathon—faith is about endurance, not quick victories. In other words, after doing something good (or doing a good deed), don't just sit back and say "How good am I?" But, go out and do more good!
- **Cloud of Witnesses:** While the original audience looked back to Israel's heroes, we might imagine our own "stands" filled with people of faith—grandparents, church leaders, neighbors—whose steadfastness inspires us. Who inspired you? For me, my father, but also several key friends and my brother, who were able to see through political and social entanglements to offer views that just weren't those I would get caught up in with opinions, biases and that hard-to-get-over local-only experience.



- **Throwing Off Hindrances:** The “sin that so easily entangles” can be modern distractions, grudges, or misplaced priorities that slow our spiritual progress. My biggest problem is comparison anger ... “Why isn’t it going my way? Why are they doing that? What were they thinking?” Being judgmental typically causes anger with me.
- **Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus:** In Grant County, where tradition runs deep and community is close-knit, this is a reminder not to get sidetracked by politics, church disputes, or the desire for comfort. Jesus’ example of enduring hardship for the sake of joy is a call to keep the mission central—loving God and neighbor, even when the cultural climate is resistant or cynical.
- **Faith Amid Opposition:** Just as early Christians faced political powers and public scorn, believers today may face skepticism, division, or indifference. In a rural Indiana context, this may mean standing firm in living out the gospel even when it means challenging ingrained prejudices or apathy.

SUMMARY

Hebrews 11:29–12:2 recalls the faithful who overcame impossible odds and those who endured unimaginable suffering, showing that faith’s victory isn’t always worldly success. These witnesses surround believers as encouragement to run the race of faith with endurance. The passage urges believers to strip away anything that slows them, focusing entirely on Jesus, the one who begins and perfects our faith. His endurance of the cross, motivated by joy, is the ultimate model for persevering through trials. For modern readers—whether in first-century Rome or 21st-century Grant County—the message is clear: faith means steady, determined obedience, regardless of circumstances, sustained by the hope of what lies ahead.



Addendum:

Faith Heroes

Hebrews Reference	Hero/Event	Old Testament Passage	Key Act of Faith
11:29	Israelites crossing the Red Sea	Exodus 14:13–31	Trusted God to deliver them through the waters while the Egyptian army pursued.
11:30	Fall of Jericho	Joshua 6:1–20	Marched in obedience to God’s unusual battle plan for seven days, leading to the city’s collapse.
11:31	Rahab the prostitute	Joshua 2:1–21; 6:22–25	Protected Israelite spies, aligning herself with God’s people despite personal risk.
11:32	Gideon	Judges 6–8	Led a small army to victory over the Midianites by trusting God’s strategy.
11:32	Barak	Judges 4–5	Partnered with Deborah to defeat Sisera’s army, relying on God’s promise.
11:32	Samson	Judges 13–16	Though flawed, he acted in faith to deliver Israel from Philistine oppression.
11:32	Jephthah	Judges 11–12	Defeated the Ammonites by trusting God’s power, despite a tragic vow.
11:32	David	1 Samuel 16–1 Kings 2	Shepherd, king, warrior, and psalmist who trusted God through victories and failures.
11:32	Samuel	1 Samuel 1–25	Prophet and judge who guided Israel faithfully through transition to monarchy.
11:32	The Prophets	Multiple books	Spoke God’s truth despite persecution, exile, and threats.
11:33–34	Unnamed believers	Daniel 6; 3; 1 Kings 17; etc.	Shut lions’ mouths, quenched flames, escaped the sword, gained strength in weakness.
11:35–38	Martyrs & persecuted saints	2 Maccabees 6–7; Jeremiah; tradition	Chose suffering and death over renouncing faith; wandered homeless, endured poverty, mistreatment, and violence.



Addendums From Last Week's Conversations:

Where was Moses before leaving for the Promised Land?

Before Moses left for the Promised Land, he spent a significant portion of his life in Midian. After fleeing Egypt to escape Pharaoh's wrath for killing an Egyptian, Moses lived in **Midian** for 40 years. He worked as a shepherd and married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian. It was during this time that Moses encountered God in the form of the burning bush at Mount Horeb (Sinai), where God called him to return to Egypt and lead the Israelites out of slavery.



How is Jewish lineage determined?

In traditional Jewish law, lineage is determined through the mother. According to Jewish law, if the mother is Jewish, then the child is considered Jewish, regardless of the father's identity. This principle stems from the idea that a child's Jewish identity is inherited from the mother because the mother's status is directly passed down through the generations.

If the father is Jewish and the mother is not, the child would not be considered Jewish according to traditional Jewish law. However, if the child wishes to be considered Jewish, they would need to go through a formal conversion process.

This matrilineal (mother's side) descent is in contrast to other cultures or systems where lineage might be traced through the father, but it's a core aspect of Jewish identity.

CONVERSION TO JUDAISM

In traditional Jewish law, conversion to Judaism makes an individual Jewish. A person who undergoes the formal conversion process is considered fully Jewish in every way, including religiously and culturally. This process typically involves:

- **Circumcision** (for males, if not already circumcised),
- **Baptism** (a ritual immersion in a mikvah, or ritual bath),
- **Study of Jewish law, customs, and traditions**, and
- **Acceptance of the mitzvot (commandments)** of the Torah.



Once this process is completed, the individual is considered part of the Jewish people and has the same religious, cultural, and legal standing as someone born to a Jewish mother.

However, there are some differences in the way conversions are viewed across different Jewish denominations:

- **Orthodox Judaism** holds that only those who undergo conversion according to strict halachic standards (including the guidance of a rabbinic court) are considered Jewish.
- **Reform and Conservative Judaism** may have slightly different requirements for conversion, but they generally recognize the validity of conversions as making a person Jewish.

In any case, a converted individual is not considered merely a "follower" of Judaism; they are considered fully Jewish according to Jewish law, with the same rights and obligations as anyone born Jewish.

A WOMAN'S CONVERSION

If a woman converts to Judaism, her offspring would be considered Jewish according to traditional Jewish law, because Jewish identity is passed down through the mother. This applies even if the father is not Jewish. So, a child born to a Jewish mother—*whether she was born Jewish or converted*—would be recognized as Jewish.

In this case, the mother's Jewish status is the determining factor, and the child is seen as part of the Jewish community, regardless of the father's background.

The Difference between "News" and "Opinions"

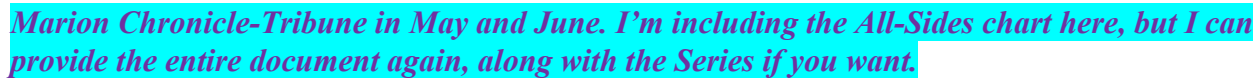
What I heard last week: "News is divisive. It's shaping our thoughts. Don't watch the news."

I get that, but only ... if the word "News" was replaced by the word "Opinions". Is the other way to get your "news" from friends, social media, and sources that would possibly be even more tainted? And, "experience" can be (usually is) anecdotal ... it's typically local, it's typically with like-minded people.

I understand the concern about how news today can feel divisive and manipulative. It's hard not to feel like media outlets are trying to shape our opinions rather than just reporting facts. But there's a difference between the news itself and the opinions people express. **The news, when it's done correctly, should be about providing facts, even if those facts are sometimes hard to stomach. Opinions, on the other hand, are often shaped by personal beliefs and may not always reflect the whole truth. WE NEED WATCHDOGS!**

If we only get our information from social media, talk-show hosts or friends, we're often just hearing echoes of our own views, which can make us more certain we're right—without considering the bigger picture. Sometimes, those sources can be even more tainted because they lack journalistic standards. The key is not to avoid the news altogether, but to be selective about the sources we trust. It's about learning how to think critically about what we're reading or hearing, whether it's from a news outlet, a friend, or even our own experience. As I like to say: **"If it sounds either too good or too bad to be true, then it probably is not true."** So, instead of just shutting out the news, we can aim to balance it. Maybe we seek out news that offers a range of perspectives—some that might challenge what we already believe.

Let's go back to the "May Contain Lies" discussion we had earlier this year. This was the research/reading that led to the "Choosing Truth in a Culture of Misinformation" that ran in the



Retirees and planners focused on material security: the parable reminds them to prioritize eternal values, not just estate planning.

This touches on how different biblical principles can be interpreted in ways that seem contradictory on the surface, yet both can be valid within their respective contexts. Let's unpack this:

The parable in Luke 12:13-21 (the Parable of the Rich Fool) emphasizes the dangers of focusing too much on material wealth, especially when it takes precedence over one's relationship with God. In the parable, the rich man plans for an abundant future but is called a fool by God because his life is demanded of him that very night. The central lesson is that accumulating wealth, especially without considering God's will or the eternal perspective, is futile. Jesus concludes: **"This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God"** (Luke 12:21).



- **Focuses on Money:** Someone advocating for focusing on money might point out that the rich fool wasn't wrong in planning for the future, but that he was foolish because he did it without considering God or his own spiritual well-being. The issue isn't the act of planning but the **prioritization** of wealth above all else.
- **Caution:** The parable does caution against *hoarding wealth* for selfish gain, not against responsible planning. It's about balance and ensuring that we don't let money become an idol, overshadowing our relationship with God. **Plus, it's not our job to judge if someone is hoarding their money. As I've said before, let's not try to do God's job.**

2. BIBLE'S TEACHINGS ON FINANCIAL PLANNING:

There are scriptures that encourage wise financial planning, investment, and stewardship of resources. For example, Proverbs 21:5 says, "*The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty,*" which supports the idea of planning ahead. Jesus also tells the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), where servants are rewarded for wisely investing the resources entrusted to them. In these cases, planning and using money wisely can be seen as a virtuous thing.

- **Focus on Money:** Someone who advocates for planning might argue that these scriptures show that financial planning is responsible and that it's important to manage resources well to provide for oneself and one's family. They may see this as evidence that the Bible does support material planning as a form of stewardship.
- **Trust in God:** The Bible doesn't oppose planning or saving for the future. Proverbs and the parable of the talents (**Matthew 25:14–30** - there's a similar version in Luke 19:12–27 called the Parable of the Minas) show that it's wise to manage resources well. **However, the key is that this planning should never overshadow our trust in God or become a source of pride or security apart from Him.**

3. BRIDGING THE TWO PERSPECTIVES:

Both viewpoints are rooted in valid biblical principles. The tension comes in knowing how to prioritize these principles. Jesus' teachings often center on the heart's attitude toward money rather than the money itself. It's not that wealth is inherently evil, but that it can become a stumbling block if it becomes the ultimate priority over eternal values.

The Bible encourages wise stewardship, but it warns that wealth should not become our god. When we plan, we should remember that we are stewards of what God provides, and we should use our resources to serve His purposes—not just for our own comfort or security.

All of our conversations should have a balanced view ... it's not about rejecting financial planning but ensuring that **God remains the ultimate priority. It's about perspective—using wealth responsibly while remembering that it can't provide eternal security.**

COVID Vaccination Conversation

It's understandable that discussions about COVID-19 vaccines can be sensitive, especially when personal anecdotes are shared. However, I think it would be helpful to refer to credible data and studies.

LIVES SAVED BY COVID-19 VACCINES

According to a study published in The Lancet, COVID-19 vaccinations prevented an estimated 14.4 million deaths globally in the first year of the vaccination campaign. Additionally, the World Health Organization reported that, in the European Region, vaccinations saved more than 1.4 million lives, reducing deaths by at least 57%.



The *Lancet* is one of the world's oldest and most respected peer-reviewed medical journals, founded in 1823, known for publishing high-quality research, clinical studies, and reviews that undergo rigorous expert scrutiny before publication. Its credibility comes from this long-standing reputation and strict editorial and peer-review standards. This "lives saved" modeling estimate comes from infection rates, vaccine coverage, and effectiveness against severe disease and death, comparing observed outcomes with a hypothetical scenario where no vaccines were available.

Just as God calls us to care for our neighbors and steward our own health, COVID-19 vaccines have been estimated to save millions of lives worldwide, protecting not only ourselves but those around us (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Matthew 22:39).

DEATHS ATTRIBUTED TO COVID-19 VACCINES

While the vast majority of individuals experience only mild side effects from COVID-19 vaccines, there have been rare reports of severe adverse events. A study published in *Vaccines* reviewed approximately 200 million vaccinated individuals in the U.S. and found 55 reported deaths following vaccination. However, in 17 of these cases, a causal relationship was excluded, indicating that these deaths were not directly caused by the vaccine ... that leaves 38 out of 200,000,000.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) monitor vaccine safety through the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). It's important to note that VAERS accepts reports from the public, and reports alone cannot determine if a vaccine caused or contributed to an adverse event.

WHERE DOES SCRIPTURE FIT?

It's helpful to lean on scriptures that emphasize **wisdom, stewardship, love for others, and trusting in God's guidance**. Here are some scripture ideas that can help frame a thoughtful Christian perspective:

1. Stewardship of Health and Wisdom

- **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** – *Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.*
 - **Application:** This scripture can highlight the importance of taking care of our health as a form of honoring God. Vaccination can be seen as part of that responsibility, helping to preserve our bodies **and protect others**.

2. Love for Others and Protecting the Vulnerable

- **Matthew 22:39** – *Love your neighbor as yourself.*
 - **Application:** Vaccination, as a means of preventing the spread of a contagious disease, **can be viewed as an act of love for our neighbors, especially those who are vulnerable, such as the elderly or immunocompromised.**
- **Philippians 2:4** – *Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*
 - **Application:** This verse encourages thinking about others' well-being. Getting vaccinated can be seen as considering the **collective health of a community, not just individual well-being.**

3. Wisdom and Discernment

- **Proverbs 3:5-6** – *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*
 - **Application:** This scripture encourages trusting in God's wisdom. When navigating difficult decisions, such as those involving health and vaccines, it is a



reminder to seek God's guidance and trust that He works through science and medicine for our good. In other words, PRAY about it.

- **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.*
 - **Application:** This reminds us to seek wisdom from God, especially when making important decisions like health choices. It can be helpful when navigating mixed messages about vaccines and personal safety. Pray.

4. Responsibility and Action

- **James 2:14-17** – *What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*
 - **Application:** This scripture can be applied to the discussion about vaccines by emphasizing that faith should lead to action. If we trust that vaccines can save lives and protect others, then acting in faith by getting vaccinated or encouraging others to do so aligns with living out our faith through action. Based on the data, I would say it's a trustworthy vaccine.

5. Avoiding Fear and Trusting God

- **2 Timothy 1:7** – *For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*
 - **Application:** There's often fear surrounding vaccines, especially due to anecdotal stories. This scripture encourages believers to move beyond fear and trust in God's power, which can give peace even in uncertain times.
- **Isaiah 41:10** – *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*
 - **Application:** This is a comforting reminder that God is with us through our decisions, even in difficult times. It can help people move past fear-based thinking when considering the decision to get vaccinated.

6. Acknowledging Our Limited Understanding

- **Isaiah 55:8-9** – *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."*
 - **Application:** This scripture can help people acknowledge that God's understanding far surpasses our own. With new developments in science and health, it reminds us that God's plan might include advancements like vaccines for the common good.

In Conclusion:

When discussing vaccines and health-related decisions within a biblical framework, it's essential to focus on themes of **wisdom, love for others, stewardship of our bodies, and trusting in God's guidance**. You can encourage people to seek balance, trusting in both the science *and* God's guidance in their decisions, while also emphasizing the importance of community care and compassion for the vulnerable.