

Lesson Nine - Foolishness

Foolishness is living without taking into consideration of God's existence and His requirements.

Psalm 14:1 "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God."

Characteristics of foolishness according to the Book of Proverbs:

Proverbs 1:7	<p>"Fools despise wisdom and instruction."</p> <p>Foolish people are "know it all" people essentially.</p> <p>Despise = lit. in Hebrew = disrespect.</p> <p>Not giving proper due and attention to it --- They may listen but they don't do it.</p> <p>They do not follow advice and instruction.</p>
1:22	<p>Fools hate knowledge.</p> <p>"Hate" = lit. to hate personally. They take personal offense if you try to correct or impart knowledge. To be hateful. If you try to correct someone who is going down the wrong path, you may find that they take personal offense to your efforts.</p>
1:32	<p>For the turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.</p> <p>Foolishness involves a lack of motivation to change – to see the need for change.</p> <p>They are fine with the status quo.</p>
3:35	<p>Shame shall be the legacy of fools.</p> <p>The end result of this life brings shame.</p>
9:6	<p>Forsake foolishness and live.</p> <p>Foolish living is in the path of death – not real living.</p>

9:13	<p>A foolish woman is clamorous; she is simple and knows nothing.</p> <p>Clamorous (only use of the word in the Bible). In the Hebrew it means to make a loud sound – “hum” tumult, rage, moan, cry aloud, be disquieted, rage or roar --- the idea is a woman who is in an uproar – a loud hum. An annoying sound. To be all wrought up and letting everyone know about it. This describes a foolish woman.</p>
10:1	<p>A foolish son is a grief of this mother.</p> <p>Foolish living brings grief and sorrow to others.</p>
10:21	<p>Fools die for lack of knowledge</p>
10:3	<p>To do evil is like sport to a fool.</p>
12:15	<p>The way of a fool is right in his own eyes; but he who heeds counsel is wise.</p> <p>A person who is on the wrong path is quick to justify himself, and refuses to hear good advice. Like the person who goes to “get counsel” but all he really wants is someone to pat him on the back and support his position.</p>
12:16	<p>A fool’s wrath is known at once; but a prudent man covers shame.</p> <p>A person who is on the wrong path is quick to blow up.</p>
12:23	<p>The heart of fools proclaims foolishness.</p> <p>Speech betrays us – what we say shows where we are.</p>

13:20	<p>He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.</p> <p>The company that we keep tells a lot about us.</p>
14:3	<p>In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride.</p> <p>Pride and arrogance are markers of a person who is off the path.</p>
14:9	<p>Fools mock at sin.</p> <p>A sign of getting off the path is to dismiss or take lightly wrong actions. To think - That's not a big deal.</p>
14:2	<p>The mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.</p>
15:5	<p>A fool despises his father's instruction.</p> <p>A person who is acting foolishly is one who does not listen to instruction from mature individuals.</p>
17:28	<p>Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace: when he shuts his lips he is considered perceptive.</p>
18:2	<p>A fool has no delight in understanding, but in expressing his own heart.</p> <p>A fool is not listening – he talks to hear himself talking. Have you ever had a conversation where you felt like the only thing that the other person wanted to do was to make sure everybody heard them?</p>
18:6	<p>A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calls for blows.</p> <p>A fool stirs up trouble and gets people riled up.</p>

19:3	<p>The foolishness of a man twists his way, and his heart frets against the Lord.</p> <p>There is no submission of will to follow the Lord. There is a rebellious heart against God.</p>
28:26	<p>He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered.</p> <p>The foolish person follows his own way – whatever seems right to him.</p>
29:9	<p>If a wise man contends with a foolish man, whether the fool rages or laughs, there is no peace.</p> <p>If someone is being foolish, there is no peaceful way to talk with them. Either they will get angry or they will just laugh you off – either way there is no way to have a meaningful conversation.</p>
29:11	<p>A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back.</p> <p>A fool is quick to let it all hang out!</p>

Summary --- Foolishness is demonstrated by:

- Not listening to the Word of God or godly advice.
- Trusting in our own heart and desires.
- Being prone to vent and not listening – just interested in hearing ourselves talk.
- Results in destruction.
- Causes grief to the people around us.
- Finds pleasure in doing wrong things.
- Causes us to become upset with God/rebellious.
- Is seen in pride and in our speech.

James 4:13-16.

Believers can live and act in practical terms without consideration of God's will and purposes.

Two passages that illustrate the downward path of foolishness.

Genesis 3:1-8 and Proverbs 7.

Genesis 3

Downward steps:

She began to desire that which was forbidden.

She got close to temptation – she was in the vicinity of the tree.

Satan planted a seed of doubt in her mind about the goodness of God.

Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Lies Women Believe.

“Theologically, intellectually, we know that God is good. But deep in many of our hearts, there lurks a suspicion that He may not really be good – at least, that He has not been good to me. I believe this lie is at the core of much of our wrong thinking about God. In essence, this is the lie Satan used to seduce Eve back in the Garden. God had blessed the man and woman and created a whole paradise for their enjoyment. He had given them the freedom to partake of the fruit on every tree --- except one. When Satan wanted to tempt the woman to rebel against God, he did so by planting in her mind a seed of doubt about God’s goodness.”

Eve contemplated and justified the act.

Eve succumbed to the temptation and she ate the fruit.

The Progression of Satan’s attack:

A seed of doubt about the goodness of God is planted and he fans the embers of her desires.

Hebrews 12:14-15

Deuteronomy 29:18 & 19

Satan is persistent and overbearing.

Satan appeals to our wishes and hits our weaknesses.

Compare with Proverbs 7:4-27

Where in this passage do we see?

He got close to temptation (vv. 6-9)

Satan hits him at his vulnerable points (v.10)

Satan is persistent and overbearing (v. 11)

What do we know about this young man from this passage?

- v. 15 An appeal to the young man's vanity
- v.16 Appeals to his love of fine things.
- v. 14 Dresses it up with "religion"
- v. 19 Anticipates his objections to make him feel "secure"

Proverbs 7:24-17 The Antidote:

Listen to the Word of God.
Really pay attention to God's Word.
Don't turn aside. Don't take the first step off the path.
Do not stray into her paths.
Don't think that you are invincible.
Remember the end result of sin.

If you could rewrite Eve's story – what would you tell her to do?

If you could rewrite this young man's story in Proverbs 7, what would you tell him to do?

Luke 4:31-37.

Christ's power is available to us to overcome Satan's attacks.

II Peter 1:2-4. "As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us in glory and virtue, By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption of the world through lust."

Summary:

Foolishness is living our lives without acknowledging God and going off God's path. While wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, foolishness arises out of a disregard for God. We need to be aware of Satan's strategies. He (i) makes the act seem attractive and even beneficial. (ii) is persistent and overbearing and (iii) appeals to our weaknesses.

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Two further characteristics of the wise woman of Proverbs 31: Compassion and Preparedness.

1. Compassion

Proverbs 31:20 She extends her hand to the poor; yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.

Hebrew word for “poor” refers to: those who are depressed in mind or circumstances, the afflicted, lowly, the poor.

Hebrew word for “needy” refers to: the destitute, the beggar, needy.

Proverbs 31:20.

She stretches out her hands to the distaff and her hand holds the spindle.

The larger part is the distaff and the smaller part is the spindle.

A poetic device is seen here. As the woman reaches out her hands to the distaff (the larger part) and her hand to the spindle (the smaller part), so in the same way she extends her hand to the needy and poor, but reaches out her hands to the truly destitute.

HYPERLINK "[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Distaff_\(PSF\).png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Distaff_(PSF).png)"
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Guidelines for Giving:

I Timothy 5:3-16. What guidelines do you see in this passage for adding widows to the church support program?

Are there other resources?

Is the widow one who has a good reputation for service herself?

If a younger widow – she has the ability to provide for herself.

Giving a handout to someone who could otherwise earn a living encourages laziness and busybodiness.

What principles for giving do we see from this passage in Proverbs?

- 1) It is personal. (Luke 5:12 and 13)
- 2) It may require time. There is a certain level of commitment.
- 3) It is thoughtful – is this a person who is truly needy or destitute?

4) It is proportionate – it fits the need – whether a short term issue or a deeper need.

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2. Preparedness

Proverbs 31:21

She is not afraid of snow for her household; for her household is clothed with scarlet.

“Clothed in scarlet.”

This phrase carries a double meaning. Scarlet refers to good clothing, but the word also means ‘double.’ Her household has layers of clothing.

The wise woman is prepared for the snows of life, that is, the inevitable but unpredictable circumstances of life.

Matthew 7:24-29

How are we going to be prepared for the snows of life?

- a. Know that trials are certain.
I Peter 4:12 – Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened to you.
- b. Remember that God is sovereign.
Isaiah 44:6-7 Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the First and I am the Last: Besides Me there is no God. And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me. Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come. Let them show these to them.
- c. Expect irritations.
- d. Walk with God through the “little snows” in order to be prepared for the bigger snows.

The Big Snow! The most important thing to be prepared for!

Hebrews 9:27 – And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.

II Corinthians 5:9-10 – we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ

The testing element is fire.

Hebrews 12:29 God is a consuming fire.
Job 23:10
Rev. 3:14-18
Dan 3: 1-6, 14-15, 16-18, 19-21, 23-25.

I John 3:2-3

I Corinthians 3:11-15 Gold, silver & precious stones.

Proverbs 31:10

Job 28:18 --- the price of wisdom is above rubies.
Prov 3:15 ---- she (wisdom) is more precious than rubies.
Prov 8:11 ---- for wisdom is better than rubies
Prov 20:15 there is gold and multitude of rubies, but the lips of knowledge are
a precious jewel.

Charles Swindoll – “The Owner’s Manual for Christians”

“Father, all of us have experienced failures. It has left us broken and disappointed in ourselves. To make matters worse, there are times when a flashback of those failures returns to haunt us. Renew our hope... Remind us that just as you used (Peter) after he had failed repeatedly, so You will also use us, by Your grace. Father give us grace to match our trials. Give us a sense of hope and purpose beyond our suffering. Give us assurance that we’re not alone, that Your plan has not been aborted though our suffering intensifies. Let us never forget that every jolt on this rugged journey from earth to heaven is a reminder we’re on the right road. Lord, since You don’t save us and then suddenly take us home to glory, hear our prayer this day as we ask You to bring our attention to those things that will assist us in staying clean in a corrupt world. Give us an intense distaste for things that displease You and an increased pleasure in things that bring You honor and magnify Your truth. Remind us of our exalted position in Your Son. Refresh us with frequent flashbacks – “God is for us.” Lord, renew our spirits with the realization that we’re your possession. Then with those joyful thoughts to spur us on, may we rise above failures, find joy in the midst of suffering, grow strong despite temptation, and slay the dragons of guilt within us so we might enjoy more deeply than ever Your ultimate embrace. Through Christ, I pray. Amen.”

