

Fellowship Bible Church  
Summer, 2020  
Proverbs 26:1-12  
Les Sillars

Proverbs are not universally true laws but circumstantially relevant principles.

Two uses for proverbs:

1. What do I do in this situation?
2. How do I interpret what just happened?

Proverbs consolidate the wisdom of experience to help us make decisions—what do I do now?

They are also very useful after the fact; they allow you to articulate a judgment or an interpretation on what just happened, so you can learn from your own mistakes.

Proverbs 26:1-12

### **1 Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool.**

Rain is good, but rain at the wrong time is harmful; how is honoring a fool harmful to a family?  
An organization? A culture?

### **2 Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, a curse that is causeless does not alight.**

Some fool just cursed you undeservedly—don't worry about it, God won't honor the curse  
Also, "the greater the truth, the greater the libel"

Applied to a young ruler, the point is that when people curse you for no reason, and fools will do that, don't worry about it—be concerned when people curse for a good reason

Is it easy to ignore it when people curse you?

### **3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the back of fools.**

How do you motivate or direct a wise man? By explanation and persuasion.

How do you spur to action or direct/restrain an animal that doesn't know what you want or perhaps doesn't care?

How do you motivate or direct/restrain a fool? By force, and by pain; does this go against our culture? In what way?

**4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself.**

I have two words for you: social media.

But social media must have made it really easy to do what we're often tempted to do anyway.

What's the appeal of trying to argue in this sort of context? Makes you feel superior; is that a worthy goal?

**5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.**

Some fool has just articulated some stupid idea or plan, and if he gets his way it will only encourage him and things will get worse; people will get the wrong idea.

Given the conflict in a society that prizes "equality" above "truth," if you do have a need to correct a fool, what sort of reception will you get?

Who are the people you are responsible to correct?

**6 Whoever sends a message by the hand of a fool cuts off his own feet and drinks violence (wrong, cruelty, injustice)**

You just tried to send a message by means of a fool and it blew up in your face; undermined your own purposes, damaged yourself.

Who do you trust?

How do you send messages? What does this say about the importance of accurate communication for a ruler, a person with authority?

**7 Like a lame man's legs, which hang useless, is a proverb in the mouth of fools.**

A fool has put forward wisdom not his own, but he will misapply the concept and it won't be appropriate.

Wisdom is useless for these people—they can know the words, but it won't help.

Is there value in teaching wisdom to a fool?

**8 Like one who binds the stone in the sling is one who gives honor to a fool.**

Follow-up to "honor is not fitting for a fool." If you, as the young ruler, give honor to a fool, that suggests you don't know how to use honor.

How do wise rulers use honor?

**9 Like a thorn that goes up into the hand of a drunkard is a proverb in the mouth of fools.**

A fool grasps wisdom without realizing what it is or what it can do, and just hurts himself; the more he wants to exercise the wisdom the more damage it does.

Have you ever encountered someone who doesn't know when to quit offering advice?

**10 Like an archer who wounds everyone is one who hires a passing fool or drunkard.**

Who do you hire/trust? The point is that the damage is spread around.

Hiring is a serious responsibility; how does hiring a fool damage everyone connected?  
Who's the real fool here?

**11 Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.**

Fools don't learn from their error and stupidity, but more than that, they don't even realize what they've done is wrong; they like it, they keep doing the same stupid thing by choice.

Dr. Phil: How's that workin' for ya?

Why don't we ask that question of ourselves more often?

**12 Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.**

There's the wise man, then the fool, then the person who thinks he's wise but is really a fool.

Why is this even worse?

Do we think we're wise in our own eyes? Do we read all these proverbs about fools and think, "Yeah, fools are such morons."

Where do I see myself in these descriptions of a fool?

# You Fool

PROVERBS 26:1-12

PRESENTED BY LES SILLARS, FBC

AUG. 10, 2020

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I'd like to have some discussion but it can be awkward in a big class on zoom. We'll introduce each verse and then I'll have a question for each verse.

So, please open the "chat" box on your screen. If you would like to offer a comment, don't type it in, just type in a question mark: ? + [return].

I'll call on you, then please unmute yourself and go ahead.

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Fool: stubborn fool; like "wise" in Scripture, "fool" also carries a moral connotation. The fool rejects the wisdom of the Creator in favor of his own will and desires.

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Social media made it easy to do what

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**Mat 5:21-22 ESV "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire."**