

## **Proverbs on the Fool: How to recognize and deal with fools**

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: We are likely to call someone a fool who lifts heavy snow with his back instead of lifting with his legs. Or we might call someone a fool who accidentally drives into your lane and forces us to take evasive 避重就轻 action. Or we might call someone a fool who goes for a vacation in northern Iraq. But the Bible identifies who the real fool is, what will happen to him, and how you should deal with him. And you will hear about this today from the book of Proverbs.

Our headings are:

**Recognizing the Fool**

**Results of the Fool**

**Responding to the Fool**

Our goals: **That you will learn to recognize and deal with foolish people in a way that would lead them to the Jesus.**

### **Recognizing the Fool**

**1. A fool is one who lacks good sense or judgment in an important matter. The ultimate fool is one who does not believe in God - one who rejects God. He lacks the sense or judgment to see that there is a God and that he should serve him. There are some specific characteristics of foolish people.** Let us look at some of those characteristics.

**2. The fool has contempt for knowledge and wisdom.** He has a revulsion 厌恶 to wisdom. He prefers to go with his own idea or opinion rather than what the Scriptures say. He doesn't take time to learn. He rejects God.

**Proverbs 1:7** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But **fools despise wisdom and instruction.**

Watch out for people who don't read or want to learn. **They don't make good husbands or wives...or friends!**

**Proverbs 23:9** Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, **For he will despise the wisdom of your words.**

**Proverbs 17:16** Why is there in the hand of a fool the purchase price of wisdom, **Since he has no heart for it?**

**Proverbs 28:26** **He who trusts in his own heart is a fool...**

**Proverbs 15:5** A fool **despises his father's instruction,** But he who receives correction is prudent.

The fool has no stomach for wisdom! He is repulsed by it. It is like rotten food to him. He sees himself as the sole arbiter of good and bad. He does not consult the Bible or the advice of those wiser than he. He rejects instruction from parents. He is like Rehoboam, Solomon's son who destroyed the kingdom. If he were wise, he would take advice.

**3. The fool talks too much about nothing of substance.** He thinks he knows everything and doesn't need to learn new things. So part of his nature is to try to make other people want to listen.

Proverbs 10:10 He who winks with the eye causes trouble, **But a prating fool will fall** 嘴唇愚妄的，必自招灭亡

The “one who winks” is the idea of a scammer, a fraudster. But while the fraudster is bad, the fool is worse.

Proverbs 18:2 A fool has no delight in understanding, But **in expressing his own heart.**

Proverbs 12:23 A prudent man conceals knowledge, But the **heart of fools proclaims foolishness.**

The fool thinks he instinctively knows truth. He thinks his heart is the source of wisdom. But he causes those who follow him to fall. So guard against one who never stops talking and doesn't listen! Be quick to hear but slow to speak.

**4. The fool slanders** 诽谤 **others and brings strife** 争吵 **by his tongue** ...things that can hurt more than blows! Slandering is easy. So you can expect it from the simple-minded.

Proverbs 10:18 Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, And **whoever spreads slander is a fool.**

Proverbs 10:3 It is honorable for a man to stop striving, **Since any fool can start a quarrel.**

Proverbs 18:6 A **fool's lips enter into contention**, And his mouth calls for blows. 7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, And **his lips are the snare of his soul.**

The one who talks too much is liable to make up things to talk about when he runs out of things to talk about. And isn't it always more interesting to make up rumors, lies, or gossip about others than to speak of holy things? Isn't it juicier to talk about other people, rather than the underlying cause for Islamic terrorism...or the cause for social decay?

**5. The fool doesn't advance in life.** He is often in lower positions in society. He is restricted to limited tasks.

Proverbs 11:29 He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, And **the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.**

Who wants to invest with fools business? He is prone 趋向于 to rash decisions and so brings destruction to any business.

**6. The fool is dangerous.** He is dangerous because he is unmanageable.

Proverbs 17:12 **Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, Rather than a fool in his folly.**

Proverbs 14:7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge. 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way,

**But the folly of fools is deceit. 9 Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is favor.**

He is dangerous because he is careless.

**Proverbs 14:16 A wise man fears and departs from evil, But a fool rages and is self-confident.**

So don't let your daughter be married to him. Don't bring him into your church even if he is rich!

**7. The fool is wasteful.** He doesn't operate from the fact that all things belong to God and therefore God must be the determiner in how it is used. He believes that all things are from himself, through himself, and to himself.

**Proverbs 21:20 There is desirable treasure, And oil in the dwelling of the wise, But a foolish man squanders it.** 愚味人却把他所有的挥霍耗尽

He can also be stingy, hoarding囤积 everything for himself rather than sharing and tithing. Maybe you can ask a potential son-in-law: Do you tithe? It is one evidence if he is worthy of your daughter.

**8. The foolish man is unrealistic.** He dreams about that which he cannot receive. He is wild in his goals.

**Proverbs 17:24 Wisdom is in the sight of him who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.**

**9. The fool has no regard for his mother.** He is so selfish, he can't stand discipline or instruction. When he gets them, he rejects them – even when they come from even his own mother.

**Proverbs 15:20 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.**

**10. The fool loves sin.** This is ultimately what it comes down to. The fool thinks it is wrong to leave sin and sinful situations.

**Proverbs 13:19 A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul, But it is an abomination憎恶 to fools to depart from evil.**

**Proverbs 15:14 The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.**

Foolishness is like food to the fool. **Who doesn't like a good meal?** The fool thinks that simple pleasures are the things that truly matter. He eats it up.

**Proverbs 10:23 To do evil is like sport to a fool,** But a man of understanding has wisdom.

Who doesn't like a good game?

## **Results of being a Fool**

**1. The foolish man brings trouble upon himself throughout his life.**

Proverbs 19:29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers, **And beatings for the backs of fools.**

He could be punished for his wrongs or he could end up with figurative blows as well. Life becomes hard for the one who is a fool. Look at a couple more passages.

Proverbs 26:3 A whip for the horse, A bridle for the donkey 嚼不是为了勒驴, **And a rod for the fool's back.**

Proverbs 14:3 In the **mouth of a fool is a rod of pride**, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.

## **2. The foolish man brings eternal judgment upon his head.**

Proverbs 1:32 For the turning away of the simple will slay them, And the **complacency** 安逸 **of fools will destroy them;**

Proverbs 10:21 The lips of the righteous feed many, **But fools die for lack of wisdom.**

## **3. The foolish man will bring judgment upon others who are with him.**

Proverbs 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, **But the companion of fools will be destroyed.**

## **4. But there are other consequences as well for the fool. The fool brings sorrow to his parents.**

Proverbs 17:25 A foolish son is a **grief to his father**, And bitterness to her who bore him.

Proverbs 10:1 A wise son makes a glad father, But a foolish son is **the grief of his mother.**

Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is **the ruin of his father** ...

## **Responding to the Fool**

**1. Ignore the fool.** Don't listen to him. Don't let him force you to listen to him. Don't take his bribe to listen to him. You have better things to do. Write a letter to a missionary. Play with your kids. Call your mother-in-law. Invite a visitor to church for lunch. Invite a family and play a board game. You have God's Words to speak; you don't have time to listen to the fool!

Proverbs 16:22 Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. **But the correction of fools is folly.**

Proverbs 26:4 **Do not answer a fool according to his folly**, Lest you also be like him.

Proverbs 27:22 Though you grind a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed

grain, **Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.**

Who knows what a fool might do in response?

Proverbs 29:9 **If a wise man contends with a foolish man,** Whether the fool rages or laughs, there is no peace.

Proverbs 17:10 Rebuke is more effective for a wise man **Than a hundred blows on a fool.**

## **2. Don't ignore the fool.**

Proverbs 26:5 **Answer a fool according to his folly,** Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

Sometimes you have to confront 面对 the fool...to put him in his place. But of course you must use discretion. Sometimes you have to walk away. Confrontation may be unwise. If someone were very angry, for instance, it might not be the time to correct them...sometimes the place is wrong!

**3. Don't praise the fool.** Sometimes people want to praise the fool because they can get some benefit from him. But if you do, he might think that his life is good. How does that honor Jesus Christ? How does that lead him to Christ? If you praise the fool, you are contributing to his destruction. He has no hope of seeing the work of Christ.

Proverbs 26:8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling **Is he who gives honor to a fool.**

## **4. Call the fool to repentance, instead of praising him.**

Proverbs 8:5 O you simple ones, understand prudence, And you fools, **be of an understanding heart. 6 Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, And from the opening of my lips will come right things;**

The cure for foolishness is wisdom...and the ultimate wisdom is Jesus Christ. He is personified in Proverbs as Wisdom. (Proverbs 1:20, 3:13, 8:11, etc) When you put your trust in Wisdom, he will guide you in all things right. You will reject falsehood. You will honor God.

## **Conclusion:**

The ultimate fool is one who rejects God and he will consequently reject and mock God's law. He brings destruction upon himself. Pity the fool and point him to the Savior. But don't let him influence you.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

**1. Don't throw around the term "fool."** Don't call someone who makes a simple mistake a fool.

**2. Make sure you are not a fool, that you trust God, and that you live according to his dictates.** Remember, wisdom is to mark out your way.

**3. When dealing with foolish people, make sure you point them to the source of wisdom...the Lord Jesus Christ...** who will instruct them in Word of Life...so that they might be saved. Love, not insult, must motivate you to bring Wisdom to the world.

Finally, if you have rejected Jesus Christ in the past, this is ultimate example of foolishness. But Jesus offers you what you truly need. In his Word he has revealed how you can be saved, and how you can live your life and enjoy it to the fullest. He Word calls on you to receive his life and death as yours.