

Don't Be a Fool

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Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

Proverbs 17:10 A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.

Proverbs 18:7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.

Proverbs 27:22 Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

Proverbs 28:26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

Proverbs 11:29 He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.

1 Samuel 26:21 Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

- I. How do we recognize a fool - or realize that we are one ourselves?
 - A. Fool, fools, foolish, foolishly, foolishness is mentioned in the Bible almost 200 times.
 - B. So many attributes, character traits, habits, and ways of a fool are mentioned that it would be a long sermon just to read the Bible verses that describe and define a fool.

Websters 1828 Dictionary

Fool:

- 1. One who is destitute of reason, or the common powers of understanding; an idiot. Some persons are born fools, and are called natural fools; others may become fools by some injury done to the brain.*
- 2. In common language, a person who is somewhat deficient in intellect, but not an idiot; or a person who acts absurdly; one who does not exercise his reason; one who pursues a course contrary to the dictates of wisdom.*
- 3. In scripture, fool is often used for a wicked or depraved person; one who acts contrary to sound wisdom in his moral deportment; one who follows his own inclinations, who prefers trifling and temporary pleasures to the service of God and eternal happiness.*

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

- C. Webster did not cut fools any slack with his definition of the word.
 1. But a low IQ does not make a person a fool.
 2. Neither does a high IQ prevent a person from being a fool.
 3. It is not the lack of ability to learn, but the lack of a willingness to learn that makes a person a fool.

D. First and foremost is the fact that a fool will not listen to truth and wisdom.

Proverbs 15:5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

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

Proverbs 1:22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

E. The fool simply cannot ever learn, no matter what is done to try to teach him.

Proverbs 27:22 Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

Proverbs 17:10 A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.

1. The hardships and suffering he brings upon his own head with his foolishness will not teach him anything – he will simply get up and continue in his foolishness.
2. This is not to say that a fool cannot learn – he absolutely can listen and learn things that have to do with fulfilling his lusts and satisfying his selfishness.

F. The Scripture contrasts the wise man with the fool by declaring that wise men will listen and be instructed and corrected.

Proverbs 9:9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Proverbs 8:33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

Proverbs 19:20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

G. The wise man understands that life is about listening and learning, and especially learning from the Word of God and godly people.

Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

H. Fools and the wicked have much in common and many times are spoken of as one and the same.

Psalms 50:16-17 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

II. No one is branded a fool for one mistake, or even a few.

A. It is only when a person continues to refuse instruction and continues to make foolish choices after a long time, and shows no sign of ever learning from his mistakes, that others finally decide that he is a fool.

B. Most people are patient with young people because they are just starting out and are just learning about life.

1. So it isn't until sometime later in their life that others begin to think of them as a fool.

- C. Most people understand that everyone makes mistakes and bad choices and suffers the consequences as they grow up and mature.
- D. But some people just never seem to learn from their mistakes, and their bad choices, and their sin.

Proverbs 27:22 Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

- E. No matter what happens to them, or how hard it gets for them, they simply never seem to “get it” or “wake up.”
- F. They just continue to blindly seek their own way, and ignore all correction, instruction, and counsel from those who desire to help them.

Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

- III. To be thought of or branded as a fool is one of the worst things that can happen to a person.
 - A. It is a tragedy for the foolish person and for all those whose lives he is entangled in.

Proverbs 17:21 He that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.

Proverbs 17:25 A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

And the contrast of being a wise person:

Proverbs 23:15-16 My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine. Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.

- B. No one has any use for a fool – they are rejected by everyone – even other fools.
- C. No one will put any confidence or trust in a person when they have concluded that he (or she) is a fool.
- D. Therefore, it becomes harder and harder for them as their life goes on.
- E. They find it harder and harder to find a job, to find friends, to get along with people.
- F. At some point they realize what everyone else thinks about them and it becomes a bitter burden to bear.

- IV. The end of a fool is not to be desired.
 - A. He would not listen ...
 1. To the counsel of others wiser than himself.
 2. To wisdom itself who called to him in his conscience.
 3. To the rod ...when the hardships and troubles came over and over because of his foolishness.
 - B. So in the end he is completely alone and completely forsaken.
 - C. He is completely confused, and cannot find his way.
 - D. He is completely in the dark because wisdom eludes him because of his life long habit of not listening.

Proverbs 1:20-31 Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words,

saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

- E. The fool will not listen when God, wisdom, others, and hardships are speaking and calling out to him, so there is a point where he will not hear their voices any more.
- F. If a person lives as a fool he will most likely die as a fool.
- G. The best hope of a fool is godly people in his life when he is a child.

Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

1. This is one of the only verses of Scripture that offer any hope for a fool.
2. Foolishness must be nipped in the bud before it grows and takes over the mind and heart of that young life.
3. We can have hope for a fool because of the fact that foolishness is included with all the other sins that Jesus said defile a man, and we know there is forgiveness for all of those:

Mark 7:20-23 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

4. But as with all other sins, a person must realize they are a fool and own it before God can do anything for them about it.
5. Then they must stop talking and start listening, and only then is there hope for the fool, whether he is young or old.

Proverbs 1:23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.