

14 - LOGISTICS: THE COMBATANTS

In this battle between truth and deception - the contest of reality vs deconstruction - there are four types of combatants. These four types of players in this strategic game for life or death are identified in Solomon's book of Proverbs in the Old Testament. Proverbs identifies these four types of people and gives examples and warnings, but also advice on how each of these combatants might be beneficial, avoided or corrected.

The four combatants are:

1. The Wise
2. The Simple
3. The Fool
4. The Mocker

The wise are referred to at least 70 times in the book of Proverbs. They are described in Proverbs as:

- Increasing in learning when they hear teaching (1:5; 9:9)
- Fearing the Lord instead of being "wise in your own eyes" (3:7; 26:12)
- Loving those who reprove them (9:8)
- Receiving commandments willingly (10:8)
- Listening to advice (12:15)
- Ignoring insults (12:16)
- Speaking words that bring healing and are not rash (12:18)
- Turning away from evil (14:16)
- Spreading knowledge (15:7)
- Appeasing the anger of a king's wrath (16:14)

- Having Discernment (16:21)
- Speaking sweetness and persuasiveness (16:21)
- Speaking judiciously and persuasively (16:23)
- Seeking knowledge (18:15)
- Being full of strength and enhancing his might (24:5)
- Turning away wrath (29:8)
- Quietly holding back his emotions (29:9)

Additionally:

- Their teaching is a fountain of life (13:14)
- They walk with the wise and become wise (13:20)
- They are cautious (14:16)
- Their tongue commends knowledge (15:2)
- They will inherit honor, while fools get disgrace (3:35)

And “if a wise man has an argument with a fool, the fool only rages and laughs, and there is no quiet” (29:9).

The fool as described in the book of Proverbs in these ways:

- A babbling fool will come to ruin (10:8)
- His mouth brings ruin near (10:14)
- He utters slander (10:18)
- To a fool, doing wrong is a joke (10:23)
- His way is right in his own eyes, but takes no advice (12:15)
- His frustration is known at once (12:16)
- He flaunts his folly (13:16)
- The companion of fools suffers harm (13:20)
- The mouth of the fool brings a rod for his back (14:3)
- He has no words of knowledge to share (14:7)
- He is reckless and careless (14:16)
- The folly of fools brings folly (14:24)
- His mouth pours out folly (15:2)
- He despises his father’s instruction (15:5)

- He sets his goals on distant, unattainable fantasies, instead of attainable knowledge (17:24)
- His only wisdom lies in keeping silent (17:28)
- He finds no pleasure in understanding truth or reality (18:2)
- He finds pleasure in expressing his own opinion (18:2)
- He will be constantly quarreling (20:3)
- He devours his treasure (21:20)
- He despises the good sense of the wise (23:9)
- He will repeat his folly and mistakes (26:11)
- He trusts his own mind, but not wisdom (28:26)
- He rages, laughs and is not quiet while in an argument with the wise (29:9)
- He gives full vent to his emotions (29:11)

The simple as identified as having these characteristics in the book of Proverbs:

- The simple are killed and destroyed for turning away from Wisdom, truth, and reality (1:32)
- He lacks sense (9:16)
- He believes everything (14:15)
- He inherits folly (14:18)
- The simple will learn and become wise when the scoffer/mocker is struck (19:25; 21:11)
- The simple does not see danger, and so continues on into suffering (22:3; 27:12)

Psalm 19:7 says, “*The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*”

Psalm 119:130 promises, “*The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.*”

The mocker (also called “scoffer”) as identified by Solomon in these ways:

- He abuses and hates those who correct him (9:7-8)
- He does not listen to rebuke (13:1)
- He seeks wisdom in vain (14:6)
- He does not like to be reproved (15:12)
- He will never be wise (15:12)
- Striking the scoffer will teach the simple man (19:25)
- Punishing a scoffer will make the simple wise (21:11)
- He is arrogant, haughty and acts with raging pride (21:24)
- He is an abomination to mankind (24:9)
- The scoffer sets a city aflame (29:8)

And, not surprisingly, we are promised that strife, quarreling, and abuse will cease if we get rid of the scoffer (22:10).

Solomon sums up the three unwise types like this:

How long, O simple ones, will you love being naïve? How long will scoffers delight in their mocking and fools hate knowledge?
- Proverbs 1:22

Clearly, being a wise person is the goal. Wisdom holds the wise person up as an example to be followed, because the wise person fears the Lord, listens to teaching, and accepts advice. The wise ignore insults and avoid fools. They are recognized as constantly sharing life, spreading knowledge, and helping those who walk with them to also become wise. The wise man appeases anger and speaks persuasively when he presents truth and reality. The wise are full of strength. They are constantly increasing their might because they do not trust their own worldly wisdom, but instead, continually turn away from evil whenever it approaches.

The wise will be the victors at the end of this war - even though they will face setbacks and occasional defeat in their battles in this world, to which they have been sent to testify to truth and reality.

And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder.

-Daniel 11:33

And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

-Daniel 12:3

So, summing up the information on the three unwise combatants, we can define them in these ways:

The simple is the person who does foolish things because they do not know any better. They lack knowledge, and so can be corrected by being given correct information. Teach them and they change. They are simple because they do not know truth. And because they do not know, they are easily led by mockers and scoffers and influenced by fools.

The fool is the person who knows what is right, but lacks the self-discipline to do it. Teaching a fool does not help them, since they already have the information. What the fool needs is someone to provide discipline for them to succeed with the knowledge they already have. The fool does not have the moral discipline to do the good they know they ought to do. Their souls are empty. They will follow leadership (whether good or bad), since they cannot provide it for themselves.

For the fool, discipline will make a difference. Providing strength to the soul of the fool will empower them to gain self-discipline and overcome. Punishing the mocker/scoffer, and thereby removing the fool from their influence, is key. Follow this up by fortifying the fool’s soul with the transforming power of truth and reality, and

you will have a chance to deliver the fool from their harmful ways. But, in the end, it is still the fool that must make the choice. Will they embrace the knowledge needed to fortify their soul, or will they continue in their empty thoughts, leaving themselves vulnerable to the winds and waves of the world?

Unfortunately, fools will follow the mocker (Pr. 9:7; 13:1; 19:25; 22:10:29:8), so they must be dealt with.

The mocker/scorner rejects and abuses those who correct him and will not listen to a rebuke. He hates those who love him. He is arrogant and haughty, and attacks truth and reality in his pride. The mocker is an abomination to mankind and set cities on fire with their strife, quarreling, and abuse (Pr. 29:8; 22:10).

Because the mocker's mind is closed to instruction, he cannot be corrected with instruction (like the simple), nor with discipline (like the fool). Conflict with the mocker can only be resolved by either driving him out or removing yourself - and allowing him to self-destruct.

This may seem harsh, but remember, the mocker hates those who love him, and those who try to help him he resents (Pr. 9:8; 15:12). In a group situation, the simple will naturally follow the mocker and join in with his rebellious and divisive behavior. Punishing the mocker will teach the simple, and driving the mocker out of the group will remove strife, quarrels and insults. The term "drive out" indicates ending a relationship by force (Gen. 3:24; 4:14; Ex. 23:29-30; Josh. 24:18; Ps. 78:55).

We would be wise to apply this truth to our understanding of certain organizations, groups, and religious institutions, which may not need to be ended or reformed. Instead, they simply need to begin applying the principle of expulsion of the member(s) who is

the mocker. Remove the mocker to save the institution, church, or social program. If the mocker is feared or respected within the organization, the mocker will drive out the wise, and that institution will continue to decline further into corruption until it self-destructs or becomes entirely insignificant.

The four types of combatants in Proverbs can be paired up with people in our society today.

- The wise are mature believers who understand God's ways
- Fools are immature believers who are saved by faith (delivered from death in a similar way the Exodus generation was delivered from Egypt), but they are still ignorant of the ways of God because they do not have sufficient knowledge of God
- The simple are captive unbelievers whose minds have been taken captive
- Mockers (scorners) are rebellious unbelievers whose hearts have hardened into evil against the knowledge of God

The Galatian believers of 48 AD are an example of foolish, immature believers. These believers had accepted the gospel but were soon led back to legalism. Paul calls them "foolish".

*O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?
It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed
as crucified.*

- Galatians 3:1

The word Paul uses here for fool is the Greek word *anoetos*, which uses the prefix "a-" to negate the meaning of the word to which it is attached. In this case, "a-" is attached to a word meaning "mind" (*noetos* is a form of *nous* which means "mind"). The Galatians were "no-mind believers".

By using this word, Paul is saying that the Galatians possessed minds that were capable of holding information - and had some very important information already - but they refused to use the discipline of logical thinking. Thus, they were *anoetos* - believers who remained immature because they did not embrace the Word of God or advance in their understanding of the knowledge of God.

Since they had not developed their knowledge of God they had little or no faith. And, because they did not have faith in God's Word, they had to place their faith in something else. The Galatians had made their own works and obedience to an empty religious code the focus of their faith. Since the foolish, immature Galatians did not have the truth of God in their souls, the object of their faith became their own performance in a legalistic system that required observance of dietary laws, religious days, and other carnal forms of holiness.

The wise man will instruct many, help many to understand, and turn many to righteousness (Dan. 11:33;12:3). To do this, the mature believer must know how to interact with each of the other fellow combatants in this battle.

Immature believers (fools) need instruction and verse by verse teaching from the Word of God.

- Jude 22 - *"have mercy on those who doubt (FOOL)"*
- Colossians 2:8 - *"See to it that no one takes you captive (FOOL) through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ."*
- Romans 12:2 - *"Do not be conformed to this world (FOOL), but be transformed by the renewal of your mind (WISE), that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."*

Captive unbelievers (the simple) are held hostage by the world, the mockers, and by Satan. The simple must be set free from their captivity by having the empty philosophies in their soul dismantled and replaced with God's truth and reality. They need to hear the Word of God and see the Light of God shine in the lives of mature believers.

- Jude 23 - *"Save others (SIMPLE) by snatching them out of the fire, to others (SIMPLE) show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh."*
- 2 Timothy 2:24-3:1 - *"The Lord's servant (WISE) must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them (SIMPLE) repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will. But understand this: In the last days terrible times will come!"*
- Ephesians 2:1-3 - *"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient (SIMPLE). All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts."*
- Ephesians 2:12 - *"Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."*

Rebellious unbelievers (mockers and scorners) who have been hardened by deceit should be warned and avoided.

- 2 Timothy 3:2-9 - *"People (MOCKERS) will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeas-*

able, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. But they will not advance much further. For just like Jannes and Jambres, their folly will be plain to everyone."

- Romans 1:18, 20-23 – "...Men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth (MOCKERS). So they are without excuse... For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things."
- Romans 1:32 – "Though they (MOCKERS) know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them (SIMPLE and FOOL).

*The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked,
but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous.
Toward the scornful he is scornful,
but to the humble he gives favor.
The wise will inherit honor,
but fools get disgrace.*

- Proverbs 3:33-34

15 - RUNNING WITH THE HORSES

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord:

"Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. You shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: "Cursed be the man who does not hear the words of this covenant that I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt."'"

- Jeremiah 11:1-4

It appears this prophecy was given shortly after the "Book of the Law" (known to us as Deuteronomy) was found during a renovation of the temple during Josiah's reign in 623 BC (2 Chr. 34:8-13; 2 Kings 22:3-7).

In it, Jeremiah called the people of Jerusalem to hear and obey the words of the covenant - which would have been Moses' words from 1405 BC that were spoken and sung to the second generation in the wilderness before they crossed the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. These words - described by Jeremiah as "the words of this covenant" - were recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, but they had been mistreated, replaced, and misplaced by the priesthood in Judah by the time of King Josiah (640-609 BC). Soon after the discovery of this document in 622 BC, while Josiah was working toward national reformation, these words were made public. They were read aloud to the people, and the priests were instructed to obey them:

Then the king (Josiah) sent, and all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem were gathered to him.

