

"Foolishness"

The Scriptures distinguish those who are spiritually wise from those who are spiritually foolish. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're exploring the tragic nature of being spiritually foolish.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. We seek the Lord's will, because we know it teaches us the wisdom that leads to eternal life. We don't want to be deceived by worldly wisdom but to hold fast to the truth. We know the Lord Jesus never lies, never misleads, and never corrupts the heart; but when people embrace sin and evil, they often follow a path that leads to destruction. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

Foolishness is defined by thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, and choices that don't make sense or show what is appropriate for the situation at the time, it leads people astray. Foolish people don't think before they act but they follow their unhealthy desires. They engage in immoral or dangerous behaviors that may cause difficulties for themselves or other people. Foolish people are often obstinate and unwilling to listen to warnings or to correct their wrongs. Because they lack sound judgment and will not listen to sound reasoning, they face problem after problem in life.

Proverbs 10, verses 8 to 9 says, "The wise of heart will receive commands, But a babbling fool will be ruined." Again Proverbs 14:8 explains that "The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way, But the foolishness of fools is deceit. Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is good will." Now a foolish person will believe the lies that he tells himself rather than listen to what's sensible. He'll actually get to the point he despises wisdom and he'll mock sin. He never considers the very thing he embraces will cause his destruction in this life and in the life to come. He'll despise anybody who tells him differently. Proverbs 1 and verse 7 says, that "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Now we offer this study on foolishness free! And if you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have many free programs and materials on our website at searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Proverbs 4:20 to 27, and explore the destructive nature of foolishness.

Our reading today comes from Proverbs 4, verses 20-27. And here Solomon is addressing his sons, helping them to learn how to live spiritually successfully. "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them And health to all their body. Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth And put devious speech far from you. Let your eyes look directly ahead And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet And all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; Turn your foot from evil." That's good advice for any young person, and those of us that are older as well.

Let's pray together. "Father, we are grateful for Your love, and we are grateful for the wonderful things You have taught us in Your word. Help us to pay attention, and to follow Your will always. In Jesus name we pray, Amen."

Wise people know there is a God in heaven and they respect Him and His teaching. Foolish people shut God out of their minds and follow their own desires. Foolish people focus only on pleasing themselves in the present rather than remembering they will face the God they ignore in the future. 1 John 2:15 to 17 says, "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

Proverbs 12:15 describes the difference between being wise and being foolish, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel." Many think their feelings is the measure of what is right and wrong. They think if they believe something is right, that God must also think like them; but the God who created us and has lived through all eternity determines what is right and wrong. God is not subject to our whims; we are subject to His laws. Proverbs 19 verse 3 says, "The foolishness of man ruins his way, And his heart rages against the LORD." When foolish people find out God disagrees with what they desire, they grow angry at God and they also grow angry at anyone who agrees with God.

Proverbs 15 and verse 5 says that "A fool rejects his father's discipline, But he who regards reproof is sensible." When people reject God and His wise counsel, they harden their hearts against the instructions of God. They refuse to listen and they refuse to repent. Proverbs 27:22 says, "Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his foolishness will not depart from him."

Foolish people would rather believe their own lies than listen to God and change their ways. Jeremiah 17:9 to 11 says, that "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the LORD (says), (that I) search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds. And as a partridge that hatches eggs which it has not laid, So is he who makes a fortune, but unjustly; And in the midst of his days it will forsake him, And in the end he will be a fool." People do reap what they sow; and you know what, that never changes.

We must be careful where we get our counsel. Proverbs 13 and 20 says that "He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm." If I listen to foolish counsel, I will think and act foolishly. If I listen to wise counsel, I will think and act wisely. When the children of Israel rejected God and began following idols, they foolishly set upon a path that would lead to their ruin. They stopped listening to the true prophets and listened to the false prophets who told them what they wanted to hear. Jeremiah 23:16 to 18 explains: Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the mouth of the LORD. They keep saying to those who despise Me, 'The LORD has said, "You will have peace" '; (And then He says) And as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart, They say, 'Calamity will not come upon you.' But who has stood in the council of the LORD, That he should see and hear His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened?"

Ultimately, the people of Judah faced Nebuchadnezzar and the powerful Babylonian army destroying their city, killing many people, and taking others captive back to Babylon. You see, their devotion to the pagan gods and forgetting the God of the Bible, the One that created them, led them into destruction. Jeremiah 4:22 says, "For My people are foolish, They know Me not; They are stupid

children And have no understanding. They are shrewd to do evil, But to do good they do not know.” When people listen to false prophets, they learn false ways that are futile and destructive.

Foolish people love sin more than they love God. When a person begins to love sin, sin begins to harden their hearts against God and against what is good. Ephesians 4 verse 19 speaks of people who don’t know God “having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.” The Hebrew writer warns Christians to watch out that this doesn’t happen to them. Hebrews 3:12 to 13 says, “Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called ‘Today,’ so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

The love of sin can cause a person to become foolish. Sin can cause people to be insensitive to the consequences of their actions, insensitive toward God, and insensitive toward other people. Fools don’t care if their words hurt others; and they aren’t afraid to lie, to gossip, to slander, or to lead others into sinful ways. Proverbs 10:14 says that “Wise men store up knowledge, But with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand.” Again, Proverbs 18:6 to 7 explains, that “A fool’s lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows. A fool’s mouth is his ruin, And his lips are the snare of his soul.”

Fools lack inner strength and self-control. Proverbs 10:23 says that “A prudent man conceals knowledge, But the heart of fools proclaims folly.” Proverbs 12:16 says that “A fool’s anger is known at once, But a prudent man conceals dishonor.” Proverbs 14:16 goes farther, “A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless.” Proverbs 20 verse 3 states, “Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.” Foolish people find trouble wherever they go, and some are not happy unless they’re in a fuss or fight. Proverbs 13:19 says, “Desire realized is sweet to the soul, But it’s an abomination to fools to turn away from evil.”

Foolish people reject God because they don’t like any restrictions on their ways. David observed in Psalm 14 verses 1 to 3, that “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt (he says), they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good. The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God. They’ve all turned aside, together they’ve become corrupt; And there’s no one who does good, not even one.” You know, there are atheists who say that their God doesn’t exist, but David is speaking more about what some call practical atheists. These are people who don’t care whether God exists; they live as their own gods. A great number of people today don’t care about God. And this is so sad, because one day they will have to face Him and give an account to Him.

Foolish people often turn to wickedness and forget God. They think they can live above the commandments of God and never face any consequences. Psalm 50 verse 16 to 21 describes this attitude toward God. It says, “But to the wicked God says: ‘What right have you to recite my statutes or to take my covenant on your lips? For you hate discipline, and you cast my words behind you. If you see a thief, you’re pleased with him, and you keep company with adulterers. You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother’s son. These things you have done, and I have been silent (God says); and you thought that I was one like yourself. But now (God says), I rebuke you and lay the charge before you.” Foolish people who reject God often think they can escape retribution for their sins, but there’s always a day when God takes charge of our souls. Don’t be deceived.

Psalm 94:3 to 11 asks, “How long shall the wicked, O LORD, How long shall the wicked exult? They pour forth words, they speak arrogantly; And all who do wickedness vaunt themselves. They crush Your people, O LORD, And afflict Your heritage. They slay the widow and the stranger And murder the

orphans. They have said, 'The LORD doesn't see, Nor does the God of Jacob pay heed.' Pay heed, you senseless among the people; And when will you understand, stupid ones? He who planted the ear, doesn't He hear? He who formed the eye, doesn't He see? He who chastens the nations, will He not rebuke, Even He who teaches man knowledge? The LORD knows the thoughts of man, That they are a mere breath."

When people foolishly reject what the Lord teaches, they must realize that God sees and knows what they're doing. Proverbs 5:21 to 23 says, "For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He watches all his paths. And His own iniquities will capture the wicked, And he will be held with the cords of his sin. He will die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray." Frequently, foolish people are so concerned with today's pleasure, that they lose sight of their accountability before God in the afterlife. James reminds us in James 4:14, "You do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You're just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." Life is brief, and you have no promise of tomorrow.

The Lord Jesus told a parable about the foolish farmer who was filled with greed but doesn't understand his life doesn't consist of his possessions. I tell you there is more involved. And so the Lord said in Luke 12:16 to 21, "The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'Well, what shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' And then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I'll store all my grain and my goods. 'And I'll say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry." ' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

The Lord Jesus describes the difference between a wise man and a foolish man in Matthew 7:24 to 27, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall."

My friend, you're building a house that will either stand or fall. Are you building it the way God instructs in His word or the way that you desire? Your choice will determine your destiny.

Let's pray together. "Heavenly Father we're thankful for Your love, and we're thankful for all Your blessing. Father help us to make wise choices that follow Your will and show our love for You. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen."

Do you remember the five wise and the five foolish virgins who were to meet their master when he returned with his bride for the wedding feast? Five were prepared with oil for their lamps, and five were unprepared. They hadn't made the necessary preparations for the wedding feast and were locked out. When they cried out to the Lord to open the door for us. The Lord answered, "Truly I say to you, I do not know you." Now the Lord told this parable to warn us to be prepared for His second coming. He said in Matthew 25:13, "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour."

Many people today want to spend an eternity in heaven with the Lord, but they foolishly fail to prepare their souls to meet Him. Many have foolishly imagined that nearly everyone will be saved, but such is not the case, no. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:13 to 14, "'Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter

through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.” Yes, only a few would find the way that leads to life. Are you one of them? Are you one of them?

To become a Christian, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that He died for your sins and was resurrected on the third day. Out of love repent of your sins and confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Now your confession should lead to being baptized into Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins as Peter said in Acts 2 and verse 38. You see, baptism is an immersion in water and causes you to become a child of God (Galatians 3 and verse 28). Won't you obey the Lord today?

We hope that today's study about foolishness has helped you to see the great need for wisely following the Lord Jesus. Now if you live in the United States and want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's a schedule of our programs and a map with the churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. And you can watch SEARCH on YouTube! Now we ask that you subscribe to our channel, that's "SearchTVMinistry" and when you've subscribed and watch, be sure to like the programs, that helps us to spread the program. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, if you get a hold of us, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

We do ask that you show God your love by worshiping at church. You need a church family. Now if you can attend, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. We ask that you keep searching God's Word with us and please be sure to tell a friend about this program. As always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.