

Studies In Proverbs Lesson Two

The Way Of A Fool

THE BOOK IS DESIGNED ...

Proverbs 1:1-7

1. To make a person wise! cf. James 1:5-8
2. To learn how to:
 - a. Act wisely and righteously
 - b. Treat others with fairness
3. To give ...
 - a. The ignorant, common sense
 - b. The young, sound advice
 - c. The wise, even more wisdom
4. Takes effort. cf. Proverbs 2:1-6

Great need for wisdom.

- The walk of a Christian is to be the walk of wisdom.
Ephesians 5:15-17
– Value of time.
- The word of God equips man unto every good work.
2 Timothy 3:16-17

DEFINING WISDOM ...

- "Wisdom ... may be defined as a realistic approach to the problems of life ..." - 20th Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge
- "Ability to judge correctly and follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding." Nelson Bible Dictionary.
- "The Book of Proverbs is a good example of practical wisdom; it encourages the pursuit of wisdom and the practice of strict discipline, hard work, and high moral standards as the way to happiness and success." (Ibid)
- A proverb is "a short sentence based on a long experience."

What Is A Proverb?

- Note: Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings with no particular arrangement or outline. A lot like life itself. It is a book about life.
- Note: A Proverb is not intended as an absolute.
 - Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it."
 - Proverbs 3:1-2, "My son, forget not my law; But let thy heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and years of life, And peace, will they add to thee."
 - Proverbs 10:4, "He becometh poor that worketh with a slack hand; But the hand of the diligent maketh rich."
 - Proverbs 13:9, "The light of the righteous rejoiceth; But the lamp of the wicked shall be put out."

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

- A. "The way of" denotes one's pattern of life, the course of action he takes, etc.
- B. "The way of" is used to refer to different persons, or different kinds of life.
 - Proverbs 13:15, "... but the way of transgressors is hard."
 - Proverbs 1:19, "so are the ways of everyone that is greedy"
 - Proverbs 4:14, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men."
 - Proverbs 8:20, "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment."
 - Isaiah 26:7, "the way of the just is uprightness ..."

The wise man and the fool in Proverbs

10:1, 8, 13, 14	16:22
11:12, 29	17:10, 24
12:1, 15, 16, 23	19:25
13:1, 16, 20	21:11, 20
14:1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 24, 29, 33	22:3
15:2, 5, 7, 14, 20, 21	27:12
	29:8, 9, 10

The wise man and the fool

- The wise man is willing to listen; he profits from instruction.
- The fool is not only unwilling to listen, he cannot conceive of being taught how to do something.
- The wise man plans his life and thinks about what he is doing.
- The fool is haphazard and has no plan.
- The wise man is careful about what he says, and he knows when to keep quiet.
- The fool opens wide his mouth and pours forth foolishness.

The wise man and the fool

- The wise man knows that actions and words have consequences, and he is careful to provoke by his words and actions the consequences that are desirable.
- It never dawns on the fool that something may be HIS fault, that something he did may have caused his misfortune, and he is doomed endlessly to make the same mistakes again and again.
- The wise man knows that the most important thing in life is to walk in God's ways.
- The fool may deceive himself into thinking there is no God (Psalms 14:1); or he may simply never bother to think about what life is all about.

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

Places his trust in himself. Proverbs 12:15; cf. 28:26

1. He acts like a "know it all"
Proverbs 18:13 – he answers "*a matter before he hears it.*"
2. He is like a child who despises his father's instruction. Proverbs 15:5

➤ **Instead of trusting in himself, he ought to trust in God. Proverbs 3:5-6**

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

Despises wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7

1. He has "*no delight in understanding ...*" Proverbs 18:2
2. He will "*despise the wisdom*" of the words of the wise. Proverbs 23:9; cf. 1 Kings 12:6-15
3. His attitude is the very opposite of that of Cornelius. Acts 10:29-33
4. His attitude is the opposite of that of the penitent jailor. Acts 16:29-30

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

Feeds on foolishness. Proverbs 15:14

1. "*The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge...*" Proverbs 15:14
2. "... *But the mouth of fools feedeth on folly (foolishness KJV).*" Proverbs 15:14
3. Spiritually we are what we eat. cf. Proverbs 23:7-9; 4:23, "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life.*"

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

Does not exercise self control.

Proverbs 12:16

1. His "wrath is presently known" (*Known at once,* NKJV)
2. At the least provocation he becomes offended; his pride is easily hurt. Proverbs 13:10. He stirs up strife. Proverbs 15:18
3. It is safer to meet a "bear robbed of her cubs than a fool in his folly." Proverbs 17:12
4. His "wrath" is heavy. Proverbs 27:3
5. In contrast, God wants a person to be "slow to anger," and to rule "his spirit." Proverbs 16:32; Proverbs 29:11; cf. Ephesians 4:26; James 1:20

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

Does not exercise tongue control.

Proverbs 29:11

1. He hides hatred with lying lips, and slanders. Proverbs 10:18
2. He is known for a "multitude of words ..." Proverbs 10:19
3. His mouth pours "out foolishness." Proverbs 15:2
4. His "lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for stripes" Proverbs 18:6
5. "A fool's mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul" Proverbs 18:7

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

One who is a meddler in other people's business.

Proverbs 20:3

1. "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one who takes a dog by the ears." Proverbs 26:17 KJV

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

One who is a spendthrift.

ASV "There is precious treasure and oil in the dwelling of the wise; But a foolish man swalloweth it up."

KJV "There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up." Proverbs 21:20

"The way of a fool" is that of a person who:

One who is a menace to society.

1. He is a pain to his parents who bore him. Proverbs 17:21, 25
2. His speech is slanderous. Proverbs 10:18
3. He stirs up dissension. Proverbs 20:3

How to treat a fool ...

Do not dignify a fool by giving him undue honor.

1. "As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, So honor is not seemly for a fool." Proverbs 26:1
2. "Answer not a fool according to his folly, Lest thou also be like unto him." Proverbs 26:4
3. "Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own conceit." Proverbs 26:5; cf. Colossians 4:6

How to treat a fool ...

Do not knowingly hire a fool.

1. *"He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool Cutteth off (his own) feet, (and) drinketh in damage"*
Proverbs 26:6
– Do not address another through a fool.

How to treat a fool ...

Do not knowingly marry a fool!

1. *"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed ..."*
Proverbs 13:20 KJV; cf. 1 Samuel 25

How to treat a fool ...

Share with him the word of God! Mark 16:15

1. So that he may come to believe in God.
Romans 10:17; Psalms 14:1; cf. Romans 1:18ff
2. So that he may come to know the word of God.
Ephesians 3:3-4
3. But if he steadfastly refuses to hear what God says in His word, then take His word to someone else.
Matthew 7:6, *"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you."*

Conclusion:

We must not allow what has been said to cause us to conclude that a **"fool"** cannot be reached.

- *"Forsake foolishness and life, and go in the way of understanding"* Proverbs 9:6 (NKJV); cf. Proverbs 2:1ff
- The way to become *"wise"* is to hear and to heed the word of God! Matthew 7:24-27