

The Making of a Fool

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. The purpose of wisdom literature in the Bible is to teach wisdom.
 - 1. Prov. 1:1-3
 - 2. One way to learn about something is to contrast it to its opposite.
 - 3. Want to understand wisdom? Then learn to recognize foolishness.
Want to be wise? Then don't develop the nature of a fool.

I. WHAT IS A FOOL?

A. Defined

- 1. "Hebrew 'eviy' - it appears primarily in wisdom literature." (Vine's)
- 2. "An adjective meaning foolish in the sense of one who hates wisdom and walks in vanity, despising instruction and morality." (TCWD)
- 3. "Greek 'aphrone' - mindless, ignorant, egotistic, rash (especially in matters of morality), unbelieving, unwise." (Strongs)
- 4. "The word is used in Scripture with respect to moral more than to intellectual deficiencies. The 'fool' is not one who lacks mental abilities, rather is one who misuses them. In Scripture the 'fool' is the person who casts off the fear of God, and thinks and acts as if he could safely disregard the eternal principles of God's righteousness and judgment." (Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 375)

II. THE MAKING OF A FOOL

A. Trust only in yourself.

- 1. In his own eyes, he can do no wrong - Prov. 12:15
- 2. He trusts in his own heart (judgment, analysis) - Prov. 28:26
- 3. Prov. 3:5-6

B. Close your mind to instruction.

- 1. Fools despise wisdom and instruction - Prov. 1:7
- 2. Even (especially) instruction from his father - Prov. 15:5
- 3. Fools die from lack of wisdom - Prov. 10:21
- 4. A fool cares only to tell others what he knows - Prov. 18:2
- 5. A fool thinks he knows everything - Prov. 18:13
- 6. What fools know is soon known by all - Prov. 14:33
- 7. Their foolishness becomes apparent to all - Prov. 12:23, 13:16
- 8. We waste energy in trying to share wisdom with a fool - Prov. 23:9

C. Refuse to profit from discipline.

- 1. Fools are destined for much punishment - Prov. 19:29, 26:3
- 2. Yet they are unlikely to learn from efforts to correct them - Prov. 17:10
- 3. Hatred of correction is the defining characteristic of folly - Prov. 12:1
- 4. Trying to correct a fool is folly itself - Prov. 16:22
- 5. George DeHoff, Commentary on Proverbs - "When arguing with a fool, be certain he is not similarly engaged."

D. Be impulsive.

1. A fool vents all of his feelings - Prov. 29:11
2. His wrath is soon known - Prov. 12:16
3. His impulsiveness makes his folly worse - Prov. 14:29

E. Chose to play with sin.

1. Evil is like sport to a fool - Prov. 10:23
2. They make fun of sin - Prov. 14:9
3. He is not afraid of the consequences of sin - Prov. 14:16

F. Refuse to change.

1. Regardless of the most extreme efforts to rehabilitate him - Prov. 27:22
2. He considers it an abomination to depart from evil - Prov. 13:19
3. A fool is like a dog that returns to his own vomit - Prov. 26:11

Conclusion:

A. So you want to be a fool? No? Then cease:

1. Trusting only in yourself,
2. Listen objectively to instruction,
3. Resolve to learn from discipline,
4. Resist impulses,
5. Refuse to consider sin lightly,
6. Change when God deems it necessary.

B. Regardless of what a fool may think of himself, he will never appear as anything except foolish.

1. Prov. 26:1, 8, 3:35

C. Who is the greatest of fools?

1. Psalm 14:1, 92:5