



## Introduction

[Teacher's Note: Begin your lesson with a humorous personal story of a situation where you were unwise.]

Has anyone ever read the book of Proverbs? Proverbs was written by King Solomon. Does anyone know what made King Solomon different from any other man in history?

[Allow answers. He was the wisest man who ever lived.]

Tonight, we will be talking about this man in Proverbs who Solomon simply calls “the foolish man.” The entire message of the book of proverbs is this: be wise—do not be like the foolish man.

Have you ever been reading the Bible or listening to a Bible lesson and thought to yourself, I know someone who REALLY needs to hear this? Now, that's not necessarily a bad thing! Sometimes, when we love someone so much, and they are doing foolish things, we genuinely want them to learn the truth!

But today, we're going to be looking at our own lives and asking ourselves the question, am I the fool?

[Pray here.]

Throughout Proverbs, Solomon contrasted the foolish person with the wise person. Here are some of the characteristics of a foolish person that Solomon wrote about in Proverbs:

Laziness: A fool is often lazy and unwilling to work hard.

Stubbornness: Fools hate correction and advice, refusing to learn from their mistakes. Remember: **Proverbs 12:1b (NIV)** “... *Whoever hates correction is stupid.*”

Careless Speech: A fool's words are reckless, harmful, and unthoughtful.

Lust: A fool seeks immediate satisfaction over long-term gain.

We're putting all of those together and looking generally at the contrast in Proverbs between wisdom and foolishness.

### **Am I The Fool?**

Let's look at some other verses in Proverbs and ask that question: Am I the fool Proverbs is talking about?

[Teacher's Note: You can either read each verse yourself or get volunteers to read each verse. Feel free to add any comments you would like on any of these verses as you go through them.]

**Proverbs 10:23 (NIV)** *"A fool finds pleasure in wicked schemes, but a person of understanding delights in wisdom."*

**Proverbs 12:15 (NIV)** *"The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice."*

**Proverbs 12:16 (NIV)** *"Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult."*

**Proverbs 18:2 (NIV)** *"Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions."*

**Proverbs 29:11 (NIV)** *"Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end."*

We need to be honest with ourselves when we ask, "Is this me?"

Solomon tells us in Proverbs:

A fool is lazy, while the wise man is diligent and hardworking, glorifying and serving God in his work.

A fool hates correction and reproof, but the wise man is honest with himself when he's wrong and takes advice.

A fool's words are reckless and rash, while a wise man thinks before he speaks.

And a fool looks for immediate satisfaction in adultery and lust, whereas the wise person looks for satisfaction in God alone.

Solomon always contrasted wisdom with folly. He even wrote a section where he described wisdom and folly as two women crying out to people passing by. Look at how Solomon compares these two.

**Proverbs 9:1-6 (NIV)** *"Wisdom has built her house; she has set up her seven pillars. She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has also set her table. She has sent out her servants, and she calls from the highest point of the city, 'Let all who are simple come to my house!' To those who have no sense she says, 'Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of insight."*

So, let's look at what wisdom did:

- She built her house
- She carved out seven pillars to make sure it's stable
- She killed the animals for the feast
- She mixed her wine
- She sent out young women to call from the highest places to people passing by.

Now, let's compare that with how Solomon described folly.

**Proverbs 9:13-18 (NIV)** *"Folly is an unruly woman; she is simple and knows nothing. She sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the highest point of the city, calling out to those who pass by, who go straight on their way, 'Let all who are simple come to my house!' To those who have no sense she says, 'Stolen water is sweet; food eaten in secret is delicious!' But little do they know that the dead are there, that her guests are deep in the realm of the dead."*

So, folly did not build a house, she did not carve out pillars or a foundation, she did not prepare for a feast, and she didn't even send people around the town to call out for people to come to her. What did she do? She just sat in the doorway of her house, and she shouted at people passing by.

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