

2. Fools

October 4, 2009

When I hear the word “fool”, I cannot help myself remember the walking jewelry store Mr. T from one of 80’s TV action series “A-Team”. He often called others “You crazy fool”. Yes, it was a very silly show. What does Mr. T have anything to do with this morning’s teaching? Absolutely nothing.

Last Sunday, we learned about the major theme of this Book, Proverbs – wisdom, we find contrasts between wisdom and fool verses after verses. NT quotes Proverbs over 20 times. If you want to be blessed by the Lord, I highly recommend you read one chapter of this Book of Proverbs everyday. There are 31 chapters for the majority months of the year. For those 30 day months, you can read two chapters in a day. When 28 days February rolls in, you have a feast of reading to do. You will learn that your life will be enriched with the wisdom that comes from the Lord.

A. THE DEFINITION OF FOOL ACCORDING TO JESUS

Luke 12:15-21 And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.”’ 20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ 21 So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

In Scripture, a fool is not someone with a low intelligence, but one who dishonors and disobeys God. According to Jesus, the definition of fools is the one who lays up treasure for oneself and is not rich toward God.

A person can have many doctorate degrees, but he would be considered a fool in God’s eyes, if that person rejects God’s will and His ways. Indeed, a fool can not see God’s purpose in his life. It is not about glorifying oneself, but bringing glory to the Lord.

B. FOOL LOVES TO ARGUE

Proverbs 18:6 A fool’s lips enter into contention, And his mouth calls for blows. Have you noticed that some people just love to argue? They are contentious and verbally very combative.

As a Bible teacher and pastor, I have had enough experiences with some argumentative people who wanted to argue with me from hair splitting silly doctrines to completely downright heresies. One thing I’ve noticed from those people, they don’t care if their arguments are correct biblically. All they care about is winning the argument. The best thing for us to do is walk away from them, because they are not going to be convinced. They are not seeking the truth. They want to argue for the sake of argument. Don’t get pulled in.

For an example, many years ago a man contacted me that the sinner’s prayer we usually ask the brand new believer to repeat is unbiblical. He argued that it is not in

the Bible. I told him that he was absolutely correct. But when we combine several key verses from the NT, it becomes the base of the sinner's prayer that would make sense to the brand new believer to pray. But to him, that was not good enough. He wanted some blood, he wanted to continue in argument. I stopped talking to him.

Proverbs 20:3 It is honorable for a man to stop striving, since any fool can start a quarrel.

C. 11 CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOLS

1) Fools mock at sin.

Proverbs 14:9 Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is favor.

A typical characteristic of a fool is ignoring one's sins. They take their sins lightly because they have no regards for God's Word, His holiness and righteousness and the Bible. In other words, fools are ignorant of God's principles. They sacrifice everyone else and everything else for their own selfishness like young children make their own rules while they play for their own advantage.

Ecclesiastes 5:1 Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil.

2) Fools response to temptation easily and quickly.

Proverbs 7:21-23 With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, With her flattering lips she seduced him. 22 Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, 23 Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it would cost his life.

We are going to study more about temptation and seduction in next week. Since a fool doesn't think sin is a bad thing, he jumps right into it. In other words, he doesn't think about consequences of his sins.

3) Fools waste their lives and money away.

Proverbs 21:20 There is desirable treasure, And oil in the dwelling of the wise, But a foolish man squanders it.

Fools don't see a reason to save for future, or use their lives and money wisely. Helping others or giving to God is out of the question, it is all about being selfish and they literally blow their time and money away for nothing and stupid things. I hope that none of you are like that. Our life and money belong to our God and we need to use them for His glory alone.

4) Fools often fly off the handle, harbors anger and resentment.

Proverbs 12:16 A fool's wrath is known at once, But a prudent man covers shame.

Proverbs 14:29 He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.

Those who have a tendency to fly off the handle come up with excuses for their outburst of anger for generic heritage – such as, being Irish, Spanish, Italian or whatever. I don't care if you inherited all three or more. That would be what you were before you came to Christ, but now that you are in Christ, you have no excuse.

Because we are supposed to be more like Jesus, less like ourselves.

Psalms 103:8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

Colossians 3:8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

Does it mean we cannot get angry? Oh yes, we can. God gets angry but He doesn't sin. That is what we call righteous indignation. But when we get angry without control, we sin.

Ephesians 4:26-27 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil.

5) Fools practice deception for his own benefit.

Proverbs 17:7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, Much less lying lips to a prince.

Fools don't think twice about lying. Because he takes sins lightly and most of all he ignores what God speaks to human through the Word of God, there is no limit in his deception.

Fools are not known for speaking truth accurately, rather they are known for deception. They don't think about the consequences of their lying.

The word 'prince' can be also translated as 'ruler'. I guess ancient Israel had its share of lying politicians like we have in this country, especially Washington, D.C.

6) Fools are filled with empty pride.

Proverbs 14:3 In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.

Fools think that they are always right and everybody else is wrong. Fools do not respond to correction.

Proverbs 17:10 Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool.

Fools trust their own hearts and go by their own emotion over everything. They are the ones who think that they know everything while they don't.

Proverbs 28:25-26 He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the Lord will be prospered. 26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.

7) Fools resist the Lord and His Word.

Proverbs 19:3 The foolishness of a man twists his way, And his heart frets against the Lord.

Once I was told by a person who claimed to be a Christian but her lifestyle proves otherwise. She asked me a question about the Bible, I answered. She didn't like what I said because the Word of God rebukes her lifestyle. She told me that is not how she interprets the particular Scriptures. So I told her, "I've been a Bible teacher almost twenty years and am a pastor. I do this for living and study it every week, but you don't." She was not interested in what I said. Then the Holy Spirit prompted me a couple of verses:

Matthew 7:6 Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Proverbs 11:22 As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, So is a lovely woman who lacks discretion.

8) Fools spreads slander.

Proverbs 10:18 Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, And whoever spreads slander is a fool.

Somebody who is wise said this, "You will be completely surprised to know what others talk about you in private." Fools love to gossip and slander others. It makes them feel important while they do that. We will study more about gossip later.

I am sure that you also have heard that Christians's favorite Sunday lunch is roasting their pastors. I wonder what you guys are going to talk about me over today's lunch. Nah, I'd rather not know.

9) Fools talk too much.

Ecclesiastes 10:14 A fool also multiplies words. No man knows what is to be; Who can tell him what will be after him?

Ecclesiastes 5:3 For a dream comes through much activity, And a fool's voice is known by his many words.

You are thinking, "Well now, preacher, the Bible is talking about you, motormouth." Fools don't care to speak the truth, nor do they care whether what they say makes sense or not. It is almost like they enjoy hearing their own voice.

10) Fools are not interested in conversation.

Proverbs 18:13 He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

I am sure that you've encounter some people who were not interest in the conversation with you. While you are trying to answer their last comments, they already come up with another statement. You can see that while you are answering, either they cut you off with their next comment or their minds are somewhere else.

I believe that the Lord gave us two ears to listen more and one mouth to speak patiently. In the majority cases of counseling, the key point is listening, not necessarily speaking or giving advices.

11) Fools do not hold back, but express everything they have in mind.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

Just because something comes to our minds, it doesn't mean that it is something we must share with others. It is better to hold something back than speak it out and regret.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.

D. THE CONSEQUENCES OF FOOLS

Proverbs 15:5-6 A fool despises his father's instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent. 6 In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.

Foolishness does not stop at that individual. Like any sin, it affects others deeply.

Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is the ruin of his father, And the contentions of a wife are a continual dripping.

OK, let's move on without my commentary.

Proverbs 10:21 The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of wisdom.

I don't care how much money or what kind of fame of the fools who reject the Lord during their lifetime have left after their death. Nothing will make them to be consid-

ered wise. People might say nice things at their funerals, but what God says about them is the final. All of us are fools without God.

Proverbs 18:7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul.

Fools' thoughtless comments would haunt themselves in future.

E. APPLICATION

God is appealing personally to fools that they should abandon their foolishness and turn their hearts to the Lord. If they do, the Lord will dispense His wisdom to them liberally.

Proverbs 8:5 O you simple ones, understand prudence, And you fools, be of an understanding heart.