

CHAPTER 4

THE FOOL

What is a fool? Who is a FOOL? How would you describe a FOOL? Certainly no one (not even a fool!) would want to be called a fool. A fool is someone who is SENSELESS (he does not have the sense to believe God and do what God says). According to Proverbs 14:16; 15:7 and 29:9, what would be the opposite of a *foolish man*? _____

The Lord Jesus spoke about a wise man and a foolish man in Matthew 7:24-27. According to verses 24 and 26, what is something that *both* the wise man and foolish man did?

Therefore, would you say that the fool's problem is that of IGNORANCE? _____
According to Matthew 7:24 and 26, what makes a man a fool and what makes a man a wise man?

The
fool _____

The wise man

True-False: _____ The fool's problem is that he does not know.

True-False: _____ The fool's problem is that he does not do what he knows he should.

In light of this, read John 13:17. How would you define a fool using John 13:17?

_____ How would you define a fool using James 1:22-25?

Not only is the fool *senseless*, he is also *stupid*. He is not stupid because he lacks mental powers, but because he misuses these powers. He is stupid because of his own *disbelief* and *disobedience* (he does not believe what God says and he does not do what God says).

A fool can be a very intelligent person. A fool may have a very high IQ (Intelligence Quotient). A fool may not be mentally handicapped at all. A fool might be blessed with the best kind of gray matter (in the brain). A person is a fool, not because he fails to reason or think, but because he reasons and thinks wrongly. A wise man may be lacking in mental powers, but he is smart enough to listen to an ALL-WISE GOD!

Can a person do very well in school and still be a fool? _____

Can a person be a mathematical wiz and still be a fool? _____

Can a person do well on Sunday School quizzes and still be a fool? _____

Can a person score high on College Entrance Exams and still be a fool? _____

Can a person do poorly in all of these things and still be wise? _____

Has God blessed you with a brain and a healthy mind? Are you able to listen and read and reason and think? Are you thankful for these abilities? Are you *using* these abilities in the best way? What place does God and His Word have in your thinking and deciding and acting?

In Chapter 1 of these notes we learned that "WISDOM" is very PRACTICAL. "Wisdom" may be defined as "*using* knowledge in the right way and *putting knowledge to work*." How then would you define "FOOLISHNESS"?

_____ Can a person *know* about the dangers of cigarette smoking, and yet still smoke? _____ Can a person *know* the plan of salvation and not be saved? _____ Think of Judas Iscariot. Was his problem that he lacked knowledge? _____ What was his problem?

What do fools hate (Proverbs 1:22)? _____ (Does the cigarette smoker love to hear how nicotine causes lung cancer? _____) What do fools despise (Proverbs 1:7)?

_____ Fools have no delight in _____ (Proverbs 18:2). In light of these verses, what do wise people delight in and love? _____ The problem is not that fools lack the knowledge that they need. The problem is that they REJECT or DISREGARD this knowledge which they have. They do not use the information that God has given them. They refuse to listen to God and act upon what He says.

The fool hates the very thing that he desperately needs (see Proverbs 1:22). This is like the person who hates the medicine that will make him well and refuses to take it. This would be like a person who hates nourishing food--the very thing we need to live and survive! This is like the student who disregards or ignores his homework assignments (the very thing that will help him to learn).

What does a fool do when his father (who is older and much more experienced in living) instructs him in the way he should go (Proverbs 15:5)?

_____ What does a fool do when someone speaks to him and gives him wise advice (Proverbs 23:9)?

_____ How do you respond when your father gives you wise advice and counsel? Do you have a listening ear and an open and willing heart when your parents instruct you and warn you and give you advice? Do you heed the counsel of others such as your pastor, school teachers, Sunday school teachers, etc.? Do you display a "know-it-all" attitude or a "you-can't-tell-me-anything" attitude and an unwillingness to follow the advice of others?

Foolishness is bound in the _____ of a child (Proverbs 22:15) and this foolishness comes out and expresses itself in the form of DISOBEDIENCE and DISRESPECT. How should the parents deal with this problem and how can Mom and Dad drive the foolishness away?

_____ Foolishness is bound in the heart of older people too! Because we were all born in sin, do we *naturally become wise* or do we *naturally become foolish*?

_____ Do men naturally and normally follow the path of wisdom or do men usually go the other way

(Proverbs 1:20, 24-30)? _____
 The path of wisdom is not the popular path. Fools greatly outnumber the wise. Are you a part of the foolish majority or are you a part of God's minority group made up of those who take His Word seriously and act upon it?

The word "abomination" means something that a person hates and something that makes a person sick. What is it that fools really hate (Proverbs 13:19)?
 _____ They love sin and want to continue in it. On the contrary, if men and women fear the Lord they will _____ (Proverbs 3:7; 14:16; 16:6).

A fool is known by the way he lives. A fool does what is right in _____ eyes (Proverbs 12:15). He has rejected or disregarded GOD'S STANDARD OF RIGHTNESS, and he has established his own standard of rightness. Instead of GOD'S WAY he has chosen HIS OWN WAY. How do you think a fool will react if you tell him he is wrong? A fool does not trust in the Lord (see Proverb 28:25), but he trusts in _____ (Proverbs 28:26). Why is this a foolish thing to do (Jeremiah 19:9)?

See Jeremiah 17:5 and 7. Do you trust in *SELF* or in the *SAVIOUR*?

A true fool acts like a fool and lives like a fool. The following matching problem reminds us that a fool is known and recognized by the way he lives:

1)	_____	a fool's mischief	A.	Proverbs 12:16
2)	_____	a fool's pride	B.	Proverbs 14:3
3)	_____	a fool's perverse lips	C.	Proverbs 10:18
4)	_____	a fool's wrath (sinful anger)	D.	Proverbs 10:23
5)	_____	a fool's lies and slander	E.	Proverbs 19:1
6)	_____	a fool's punishment (It does not pay to be a fool!)	F.	Proverbs 19:29

According to these six verses, how would you describe a fool? What does a fool enjoy doing?

Fools can also be very dangerous. According to God's Word (Proverbs 17:12), would it be better (and safer) to meet a bear robbed of her young cubs or to meet a fool in his folly?

_____ Was it safe to be around foolish King Saul (1 Samuel 22:16-18)? _____ Foolish men sometimes act worse than beasts!

Is snow very fitting and appropriate in the summer time (Proverbs 26:1)? _____ Is honour very fitting and appropriate for a fool? _____ What was more fitting and appropriate for foolish HAMAN, honor (Esther 3:1-2) or shame (Esther 7:10)? _____ Giving honour to a fool would

be as appropriate as having a snowball fight in August! Snowball fights do not belong in August and honour does not belong to a fool.

Notice the problems a fool causes in his own family and home. How does the father feel about having a fool for a son or daughter (Proverbs 17:21 and compare 19:13 and 15:20)?

_____ How does the mother feel about having a fool for a son or daughter (Proverbs 10:1)?

_____ How do your parents feel about having you as a son or daughter? Do you bring gladness or sadness to your father's heart? Are you a heavy burden to your mom? How do the parents feel about having a fool for a son or daughter (Proverbs 17:25)?

_____ Do you cause your parents grief and bitterness or joy and sweetness?

Does God want fools to understand and be wise (Proverbs 8:5)? _____ A lesson such as this one should convict and bother each one of us. According to Titus 3:3 we have all been

F _____. But God has good news for every fool. It is possible for a fool to become wise. There is HOPE for you! You may be a fool but you need not stay a fool! God delights in taking a fool and making him wise. Will you let God do that for you? Will you come to the ALL-WISE GOD? Will you obediently follow God's WISDOM BOOK, the Bible?

THE GREATEST FOOL OF ALL IS THE PERSON WHO CHOOSES TO REMAIN A FOOL FOREVER!

For we ourselves also were sometimes (once, formerly) **foolish**....

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:3-7).