



August 3, 2014 | Simple, Scorner, Fool | Prov. 1:22; 8:4-5; 9:1-9; plus

Reading one chapter of Proverbs a day is a great way to grow in wisdom. We're encouraging everyone at Valley to do so this summer. (See the plan at valleycommunity.cc/resources/proverbs.)

[Q] This past week, as you read through Proverbs, did you find something that you can apply to your life? Please share with the group. (We're asking this question each week this summer.)

Proverbs describes several different kinds of people. Last week we looked at the wise and the wicked. This week we'll see that Proverbs has a lot to say about the simple, the scorner (mockers/scoffer) and the fool.

Hope for the Simple

The Hebrew word for "simple [fool]" is *pethîy* (peth-EE). The root word from which it is derived, *pâthâh*, implies extreme vulnerability, literally meaning "to be opened up." The simple fool opens his mind to any passing thought and opens his arms to any passing stranger. In other words, he lacks discernment. He fails to recognize the cause-and-effect sequences that affect every area of life.

[Q] What are the *simple* like according to Proverbs 7:6-7

Proverbs 14:15, 18

Proverbs 22:3

[Q] What hope is there for the *simple* from Proverbs 8:4-5, 9:4-6 and 21:11?

Apply: [Q] Do you know a *simple* person that you can encourage with God's wisdom? If so, how will you do that?

What to do with the Scorer?

The Hebrew word that denotes a "scorning fool" is *lûwts* (LOOTS). It means "to make mouths at, i.e. to scoff."

[Q] What do you learn about scoffers/mockers from the following verses?
Proverbs 13:1; Proverbs 14:6; Proverbs 15:12; Proverbs 21:24

[Q] God gives guidance for dealing with *scoffers/mockers*. What is it?
Psalm 1:1-2

Apply: [Q] If a *fool* happens to be a loved one, we can't just avoid them. Considering the wisdom of Proverbs, how could you pray for them?

[Q] Have you ever scorned wise advice? Explain.

The Fool

From the weekend message: The book of Proverbs lists at least six symptoms of being a fool. They are:

1. Fools won't learn from God's Word. – *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.* (Prov. 1:7)
2. Fools can't control their speech. – *The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.* (Prov. 15:2)
3. Fools can't control their temper. – *A fool shows his annoyance at once but a prudent man overlooks an insult.* (Prov. 12:16)
4. Fools are proud and self-confident. – *He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.* (Prov. 28:26)
5. Fools don't know how to use wealth properly. – *In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.* (Prov. 21:20)
6. Fools create problems and bring sorrow, especially to their parents. – *A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son grief to his mother.* (Prov. 10:1)

Apply: [Q] Which area of foolishness might *you* need God's help with? How can our group challenge you?

Only in Jesus can those born into folly, increasingly manifesting foolishness, on a crash course for destruction, be set free to true wisdom and ultimate life. "*We ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another*" (Titus 3:3). But Wisdom himself saved us (Titus 3:4–5). Only in Jesus can we truly have Wisdom and then be sufficiently changed to not merely mock folly, but pity the fool.

David Mathis at DesiringGod.org/blog/posts/pity-the-fool

Pray

*How long will you simple ones love your simple ways?
How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge?* Proverbs 1:22