

## **Proverbs 9, Aug 19, 2024 -Men's Monday Morning Bible Study**

### **Overview:**

Chapter 9 is the shortest chapter in Proverbs at eighteen verses. It is broken out into three sections: the call of wisdom 1-6; the repercussions of wisdom 7-12; the call and punishment of folly 13-18.

### **Commentary:**

#### **I. The Call of Wisdom 1-6:**

Wisdom has done something. She has built her house. Again, in this instance, wisdom is personified as a woman. She has prepared everything for a feast including building the house for the feast itself.

V3 “she has sent her maidens, she calls” Again, we see that she is summoning those who would listen. She invites them to the feast that she has prepared.

V6 Wisdom invites the simple to change their destination from death to life. She will turn a lack of understanding to the way of understanding. How many times do we hear people say, “I don’t understand”? Wisdom provides an explanation of how the world that God set up works.

#### **II. The Repercussions of Wisdom 7-12:**

V7 It is folly to “discipline a scoffer” because he will “receive disgrace”. “He who reproves a wicked man injures himself.” It is counterproductive to try and fix people who do not want to be fixed. They are in love with their folly. Of course, this assumes that you’ve made a determination about people. This is akin to Jesus’ statement about “not casting your pearls before swine” -Matt. 7:6.

For some of us, this goes against what we have been taught. We think that we need to try and help everyone no matter what. But that simply is not true. Some people do not want to be helped. They may appear to want help, but they indeed do not.

I have tried multiple times to help guys on the street corner. I have talked to them and offered to help them with job skills while also meeting their immediate needs. 100% of the time, they have not wanted this help. Most of the time, they didn't want food either. They wanted cash.

It is not wise to give the money that God gave you to steward to people that will not work. They do not want to better themselves or society. They want to wallow in their foolishness. You will be sucked down into their vortex of bad decisions if you try and help them. If you attempt to discipline and reprove them, you will inevitably incur the consequences of their behavior. You will be dragged down into the pit of despair with them. The weight is too heavy.

V8a is a command. The Bible tells you not to help or correct the scoffer. In this instance, a scoffer is someone who thinks they know better and is not able to be helped. As a person of compassion, you may be tempted to reach out and get involved. DO NOT DO IT. One of the ways you can discern whether or not someone is truly looking for help is by observing how and where they seek help. If he is on a street corner or even if he comes to church and asks for it, he is highly suspect. If you try and fix his problems by fixing him, "he will hate you." Do not do it.

V8b-9 informs us about the juxtaposition of the wise. He readily receives and appreciates correction because he is on a different path. He is seeking help. He does not stand on the street corner, instead, he goes where the wisdom is and seeks the relationship first.

V10 TFOTL The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom (1:7). This is the sixth time in 9 chapters that we've seen this concept. It is the overarching theme of Proverbs. The second part of the couplet of v10 is that "knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Theology and personal knowledge of God are how a man becomes strong and secure. Communing with God through expanding one's individual knowledge base is wise and beneficial. Some spurn deep theological study as being unnecessary. They view it as arrogance and elitism. However, these people are the simple that Proverbs warn us about. They are to be avoided. They usually cannot be helped.

Study, reflect, pray, repent, and rejoice. This is the model. Plumb the depths of God. Allow yourself to be given over to the wooing of the Holy Spirit. Come and drink deeply from the fountain of living water. Pour yourself into the unfathomable depths of the character and nature of God. Be enamored with Him. Don't hold back.

V11 gives the result of such a life... it will be a long and fruitful life. This is exactly what God says in multiple places namely, Exodus 20:12 which Paul quotes in Ephesians 6:2-3. Deuteronomy 5:33 says "You shall walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess."

There are at least 50 verses in the Bible that deal with this concept:

[https://www.openbible.info/topics/long\\_life](https://www.openbible.info/topics/long_life)

Many people die earlier than they should because they make dumb decisions. They drink too much. They neglect their health. They live a lifestyle of excess and/or take unwise risks. Why do they do this? Because they do not fear God. They are YOLO people. They do not live for eternity and as a result they do not live long here either. That is the great irony of life. If you live for this life, generally it will be relatively short. Whereas the opposite is also true. If you live for the life to come, you will, on average, live a better life here and now.

V12 is about personal responsibility. You are responsible for you. Every man must give an account for himself. We all bear the responsibility for ourselves. It is not someone else's fault or responsibility to take care of us. We are accountable for ourselves. There are no victims here. No sympathy. No compassion for fools. No excuses.

### **III. The call and Punishment of Folly 13-18:**

Again, we see how the alternative woman appears as a prostitute calling out to her Johns. The interesting thing here is that it's not just that adultery is foolish, but that ***foolishness is personified as an adulteress.***

Foolishness, in this case a lack of personal responsibility and accountability, is like a seductive woman. That lifestyle calls out and sucks them into her web like a sultry woman invites men to her bed. It appears easy, fun and pleasurable. Discipline is thrown to the wind and wild times of excitement and no worry are ahead. V17 "stolen water is sweet" she says. "Don't worry about it, it's all good," she says. "Bread eaten in secret is pleasant."

NO, it is not. The dead are there. Men are enslaved and killed. They are hollowed out and emptied. They lose their soul.

Foolishness is this seductress. Do not believe her.

Jocko Willink is famous for saying that “discipline leads to freedom.” He is right, but the saying is incomplete. It’s not just personal discipline, but it is the fear of the LORD that leads to freedom and joy, and truth, and beauty.

Application:

Carefully curate who you listen to and follow. You will become like them.

Steward your time and resources well. Invest in those who are committed to moving forward, ignoring the outside world.

Resources: Bonafice Option by Andrew Isker

Closing Prayer:

Father, make us men of rightly ordered affections. Make us love what is good and hate evil. Draw us near. Push us deeper. Make us wise. Use us to love our wives and children and build families for the kingdom. In Jesus’ name, Amen.