

## THE FOUR CHAIRS (WISDOM)

One of the things we all have in common is that we've all made dumb mistakes. Something else we all have in common is that when someone else is making the same kind of mistake we can see their error clearly, but when we are doing it we somehow have a built-in blind spot!

What do we do when the Bible doesn't give a "thou shalt not"? Some of us assume that this automatically gives us a "thou shalt"! We ask "is it wrong?" and what we really mean is "how close can I get to the line?" What we should be asking instead is "is it the WISE thing to do for me?" In light of my past experiences, my current circumstances, and my future hopes and dreams, what is the WISE thing to do?

Where do we get this wisdom? From our Creator, who knows us better than we know ourselves, and who has given us His Word ...

**James 1:5** If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

The book of Proverbs collects the most important 513 of the 3000 wise sayings that King Solomon wrote or collected (1 Kings 4:32). The subject of Proverbs is WISDOM, which in Scripture is a matter of the HEART more than of the MIND – real wisdom is, at its most basic level, simply OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

**Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

Purpose of Proverbs – to **PERCEIVE** and **RECEIVE** God's wisdom

**Proverbs 1:2-3** To know wisdom and instruction; to **perceive** the words of understanding; To **receive** the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

Four typical responses when we encounter God's wisdom:

- That won't ever happen to me, it's all going to work out
- It may happen to me but I don't care, no matter what the Bible says
- It may happen to me, but who are you to preach to me about it?
- That describes me exactly, and I want to do something about it!

The Bible describes each of these people in the book of Proverbs ...

- Simple (Naïve)
- Fool
- Scorner (Scoffer, Mocker)
- Wise

Proverbs mentions three kinds of people who desperately need wisdom, who desperately need to move from their chair to the chair of wisdom:

**Proverbs 1:22** How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

Each of these chairs will have a reaction to this sermon, and you will know which chair you are sitting in by being honest about your reaction!

## SIMPLE (NAÏVE)

If you are simple, you won't admit it (or even know it!). By the time you figure out that you are simple, you won't be anymore. And if you're in middle school, high school, or college – you're automatically in this chair! That is not an insult, because everyone comes into the world simple.

THE SIMPLE PERSON LACKS EXPERIENCE. But no one is willing to admit that they are simple and they need to face the world accordingly.

THE SIMPLE PERSON THINKS THEY CAN FIGURE LIFE OUT BECAUSE THEY'VE NEVER SEEN THE LONGTERM EVIDENCE OF SIN'S DESTRUCTION. (i.e. lung cancer, credit debt, sexual sin)

THE SIMPLE PERSON REPEATEDLY WALKS INTO TROUBLE.

**Proverbs 22:3** A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

THE SIMPLE ALMOST ALWAYS HAVE TO LEARN THE HARD WAY.

**Proverbs 21:11** When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

WHEN SOMEONE WHO IS WISE SPEAKS INTO A SIMPLE PERSON'S LIFE, THEY JUST THINK THEY ARE OVER-REACTING. But in any area of life where you lack experience, you are simple!

**Proverbs 7:6-7** For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,

**Proverbs 7:21-23** With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.

BUT IF YOU'LL LISTEN, YOU CAN GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME!  
("God, I don't understand this principle, but I'm going to trust You!")

AN OBEDIENT HEART PRESERVES YOUR FUTURE, BUT A  
DISOBEDIENT HEART WILL KILL YOU.

## **FOOL**

THE FOOL KNOWS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND  
WRONG, BUT THEY JUST DON'T CARE.

Don't you understand the consequences? Yes. Aren't you concerned?  
No. Why? I just don't care – I'll just deal with it when it happens, You're  
probably right, but I'm having too much fun with my sin right now.

A FOOL THINKS THEIR SIN IS "NO BIG DEAL."

**Proverbs 10:23** It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of  
understanding hath wisdom.

A FOOL FLAUNTS THEIR SIN TO EVERYONE WHO WILL LISTEN.

**Proverbs 15:2** The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the  
mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

A FOOL REPEATS THE SAME MISTAKES OVER AND OVER.

**Proverbs 26:11** As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to  
his folly.

THE ONLY WAY FOR A FOOL TO CHANGE IS TO FACE THE FULL  
CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR DECISIONS. (i.e. "I finally got right with  
God when my life hit bottom, when I was reaping the harvest of sin.")

BUT THE COMPANION OF A FOOL ALSO SUFFERS GREAT HARM.  
(It's not just you facing the consequences of your foolishness!)

**Proverbs 13:20** He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a  
companion of fools shall be destroyed.

You don't have to be a fool in every area of life to be a fool!

## **SCORNER (SCOFFER, MOCKER)**

THE SCORNER IS JUST LIKE THE FOOL, EXCEPT THAT THEY HAVE  
CHOSEN TO BE CRITICAL OF THOSE DOING THE RIGHT THING.

The **SIMPLE** person is **CLUELESS**, the **FOOL** is **CARELESS**, and the  
**SCORNER** is **CRITICAL**.

IF YOU TRY TO DISCIPLINE A FOOL THEY WILL IGNORE YOU, BUT  
IF YOU TRY TO DISCIPLINE A SCORNER THEY WILL HATE YOU.

**Proverbs 9:8** Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise  
man, and he will love thee.

SCORNERS DRAG EVERYONE AROUND THEM DOWN WITH THEM.

**Proverbs 24:9** The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an  
abomination to men.

SCORNERS FEEL LIKE THEY ARE THE JUDGE OF EVERYONE  
ELSE IN THEIR LIFE –THEY CONTROL WITH CRITICISM.

THE BIBLE SAYS THE ONLY THING YOU CAN DO WITH SCORNERS  
IS DRIVE THEM OUT OF YOUR MIDST – YOU CANNOT APPROACH  
THEM WITH CORRECTION, ONLY A MIRACLE CAN CHANGE THEM.

**Proverbs 22:10** Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea,  
strife and reproach shall cease.

**It is not that none of these people can repent, but if you sit in one of  
these three chairs you will have a strong tendency to ignore wise  
counsel and continue doing your own thing.**

**It's not that grace and forgiveness isn't available, it's that you don't  
want to receive it while you are sitting in one of these three chairs.**

**YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR SEAT!**

Eventually all of these people will realize that they need wisdom, but  
probably not before they have done incredible damage to their lives.

**IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO GET UP FROM ANY OF THESE SEATS!  
BUT YOU CAN BE THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE!**

In light of my past experiences, my current circumstances, and my future  
hopes and dreams, what is the WISE thing to do?

**WHERE ARE YOU SITTING? WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SIT?**

**Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and  
the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

## **WISE**

WISDOM BLESSES YOUR LIFE LIKE NOTHING ELSE CAN!

**Proverbs 8:11** For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

THE WISE WILLINGLY RECEIVE GOD'S COMMANDMENTS.  
("God, I don't understand this principle, but I'm going to trust You!")

**Proverbs 10:8** The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall.

THE WISE THINK ETERNALLY – THEY ARE SOUL WINNERS!

**Proverbs 11:30** The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

Strangely enough, in Jesus' parable of the Ten Virgins, which represents the last days and the coming of the Lord, the people who are presented as opposing the "WISE VIRGINS" are not the "simple virgins" (too naïve to know better) or even the "scorning virgins" (critical of those who are righteous), but rather the "FOOLISH VIRGINS." They know what is right, they know the Lord is coming, but they just DON'T CARE. That is the spirit of the age we are living in, and it is the most dangerous spirit of all!

**Matthew 25:1-4** Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.