

The Simpleton

CHARACTER

Because he is often a young man, this section becomes a lesson in raising adolescents. Parents know what we are talking about here is teenagers. For adults some have never matured beyond this stage.

1. **Summary:** Mentally he is *naive* and morally he is willfully *irresponsible*.
2. He lacks prudence, knowledge, and discretion (Proverbs 1:4) - He does not know where the traps of life are. He wanders through life with a smile on his face not knowing where the pitfalls are located and is actually easily led into them.
3. He lacks judgment (Proverbs 7:7; 9:4 =16). Often a young man, he lacks the ability to make correct judgments about life because he is untrained.
4. He is gullible (Proverbs 14:15). This is perhaps the chief characteristic of the simpleton. This is especially pictured in chapter 7. In this sense he is easily seduced, enticed, and led into sin (7:21).
5. He is careless and dangerous to himself (Proverbs 22:3 = 27:12). The prudent man sees where the traps are and they avoid them. The simpleton falls in the holes.
6. He is satisfied and enjoys being simple (1:22).

CONSEQUENCES

1. He suffers for his behavior (Proverbs 22:3 = 27:12).
2. He will ultimately destroy himself (1:32).
3. If he persists he will graduate and become a fool (Proverbs 14:18).



CURE

1. The Simpleton must leave simplicity and learn prudence (1:4; 8:5; 9:6). The simpleton must learn how to spot the traps and become prudent which means knowing where they are and avoiding them. Know what the moral traps are in the world. Naive people are never commended in scripture. We must be shrewd when it comes to knowing where the moral pitfalls are located.
2. The Simpleton must listen to and heed wise advice (7:24). They must learn to pay attention and not just hear the words but really listen and understand and take to heart what wise people are saying. Heeding God's Word is crucial.
3. The Simpleton must learn to avoid the pitfalls (7:25). Do not allow yourself to get into potentially compromising situations.
4. The Simpleton must consider the consequences of sin (7:26,27). Sin will mess up your life. Consider that and learn.
5. The Simpleton must observe the results of foolish living and learn (19:25; 21:11). He is still able to learn by observation. Once he graduates to the Fool he will need rebuke and ultimately he will need punishment.

The Fool

CHARACTER

We often think of the fool as a person who is stupid and lacks common sense. But in the Bible a fool has a moral problem. He does not have moral sense. A fool is morally deficient rather than mentally deficient. In making the transition from the simpleton to the fool we are moving from one who is young and inexperienced to one who is stubbornly arrogant and ignores wisdom and the fear of the Lord.

1. **Summary:** There are three different words used to describe the fool.

- The word that is used most often is כְּסִיל - (kesil) which is used some 50 times. This word pictures the Fool as one who is *obstinate* and does not want to learn the ways of wisdom. He rejects wisdom (1:22) and the fear of the Lord (1:29).
- The second word, אִוֵּל - iwelet, is used to describe the Fool proper is used 19 times and indicates one who is *insolent* and *rebellious*. He is the quick tempered fool (14:29).
- The final word for the Fool, נָבֵל - nabal, is the word used to describe him as a *boorish* man whose mind is closed to God (Ps. 14:1;53:1).

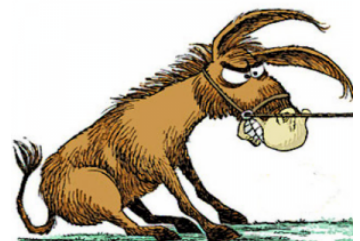
2. The Fool is un-teachable (1:7,22-23,32;17:10,16,24; 18:2; 23:9; 26:11; 27:22). He thinks that what he is doing is always right. He is the kind of guy who talks but he does not listen. After he has made a decision he does not have room to consider that it may have been wrong. He is always right (even after proven wrong).
3. The Fool is arrogant and argumentative (12:15,16; 18:2; 20:3; 26:12; 28:26). He is always right and will tell you why he is right. A mark of a fool is a man who spends a lot of time defending his decisions.
4. The Fool lacks self control and is quick tempered (14:6,17,29; 29:11). To vent your anger is fine and actually commended, but a fool gives his anger full vent.
5. The Fool is an evil schemer (24:7-9). He plots how he can be sinful.
6. The Fool enjoys his sin (10:23; 13:19).
7. The Fool mocks repentance (14:9).
8. The Fool has corrupted speech (10:18; 15:2; 17:28; 18:6,7; 19:1; 26:7,9). It tears down others and damages relationships.

CONSEQUENCES

1. He is a danger to himself (1:32; 3:35; 5:21-23; 10:8,10,14; 11:29; 19:29; 26:3).
2. He is a danger to others (10:1;13:20;17:12,21,25; 19:13; 26:6,10).

CURE

1. The Fool must be punished (26:3).
2. The Fool must gain wisdom (8:5). This is the obvious solution.
3. The Fool must be avoided (14:7).



The Scoffer

CHARACTER

The Simpleton is easily led into folly. The Fool is arrogant and enjoys his folly as he rejects wisdom. The final stage on the pathway of the Fool is reserved for the Scoffer who not only has rejected wisdom but now he scoffs or mocks wisdom and even mocks God. His chief characteristic is his *pride* (21:24)

1. **Summary:** The Scoffer not only has rejected wisdom but he now actively ridicules wisdom and the way of the Lord.
2. The Scoffer delight in his own state (1:22).
3. The Scoffer does not even listen to rebuke (13:1;14:6).
4. The Scoffer rejects the advice of the wise (14:6).
5. The Scoffer does not respond to punishment (19:25; 21:11).
6. The Scoffer is proud and arrogant (21:24).
7. The Scoffer is quarrelsome (22:10).

CONSEQUENCES

1. He is detested by men (24:9).
2. He is mocked by the Lord (3:34).

CURE

1. The Scoffer does not have much hope other than the grace of God.