

The Christian chooses his friends

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Introduction: The nature of man has not changed through time.

- A. The building of a good character does not come by chance.
 - 1. How we chose to build our lives and those that we influence will have consequences in this life and the life to come. **(Mt 7:24-27)**
 - 2. Much of your character will be formed in the home and in the choices of youth.
- B. The word “fool” is a very strong word.
 - 1. **Fool** - “Signifies ‘without reason’ want of mental sanity and sobriety, a reckless and inconsiderate habit of mind the lack of common sense perception of the reality of things natural and spiritual Or the imprudent ordering of one’s life in regard to salvation.” --- **Vine’s**
 - 2. Jesus warned against a casual use of this word. **(Mt 5:22; Mk 7:21-23)**
 - 3. There is a difference between the immature and the fool.
- C. Much of your character will be determined by whom you choose as your close associates.
 - 1. A good friend will not hesitate to correct you when you are drifting. **(Prov 27:6,9,17)**
 - 2. On the other hand there are those who would destroy you. **(Prov 13:19-20)**
 - 3. There is a real temptation to make a fool your friend.

I. How does a fool make decisions?

- A. The focus of the fool is on short-term pleasure. **(Ecc 7:4-6)**
 - 1. He will boast about sin! **(Prov 10:23)**
 - 2. He will take great pleasure in deceiving others or cheating others in order to satisfy his lust. He often will boasts about his “conquests.”
- B. The fool has no interest in understanding but rather in experiencing pleasure. **(Prov 17:16)**
 - 1. Without wisdom one will experience a tragic life. **(Ecc 2:14)**
 - 2. Because the fool only looks at the “here and now” he will despise wisdom. **(Prov 1:7)**
 - 3. They must always be doing something exciting. In fact they have no peace.
- C. The fool will not learn from failure - **(Prov 26:11; 27:22)**
 - 1. Sometimes I have seen one’s folly and say: “Life will beat it out of them”. This is not always true. **(Prov 17:10)**
 - 2. When one complains about how everyone else has treated them --- watch out!

II. How does a fool influence others?

- A. The fool has an overconfidence that causes some to follow them. **(Prov 12:15)**
 - 1. Some who lack confidence have a need to follow one with confidence.
 - 2. The fool’s confidence God calls recklessness. **(Prov 14:16 NIV)**
 - 3. The fool will maintain his way is right! **(Prov 12:15)**
- B. The fool has a perception of others that allows him to manipulate others.
 - 1. He is quick to see what works to gain your favor. Does a person need praise? The fool will give them flattery. **(Psa 12:2-4; Prov 29:5)**

2. He will tell you what you want to hear. He especially will do so if it will cause you to quit speaking wisdom.
- C. The fool will use people like a tissue and then throw them away.
 1. He will use your weaknesses to enslave you. **(Prov 29:5)**
 2. If you associate with a fool, they will push you to drop your morals.
 3. The fool will use another to satisfy their lusts. **(Prov 2:16; 6:24; 7:21)**
 4. The fool will discard you if you get in the way of their “fun.” **(Prov 15:5; 23:9)**
- D. The fool will use his temper to get his way. **(Prov 17:12 NRSV)**
 1. The fool knows how to use intimidation to get another to “shut up.”
 2. The fool will use others fears to accomplish his goals. (Ex. Slander.)

III. How can you identify a fool?

- A. How does he speak? **(Ecc 10:13-14; 5:3)**
 1. The fool has one bad experience after another because of his words. **(Prov 18:7; Ecc 10:12)**
 2. A fool will tell you who he is if you let him! **(Ecc 10:3; Prov 17:28)**
 3. A fool is quick to lie. **(Prov 17:7)**
 - a. Since a fool wants to avoid consequences, this comes easy.
 - b. Please do not think that a deceitful companion will do you good.
- B. How does he speak of others?
 1. A big warning flag is how they talk about their parents. **(Prov 15:5)**
 2. Some will not control their tongues as parents. Their home will pay the price! **(Prov 14:1)**
- C. How does he speak about God? **(Psa 14:1)**
 1. The fool wants a man centered “worship.” He does not know God. **(Ps 92:5-6)**
 2. The fool will talk about his “spirituality” and have great confidence that he knows what God wants. **(Ecc 5:1)**
 3. A fool’s interest in God exists only as means of drawing attention to self.
 4. A fool will not last long. A great concern is: “who will he take with them?”
- D. Does he listen, learn and change? **(Prov 27:22)**
- C. Once you identify a fool you need wisdom in how you handle him.
 1. Do not just write his behavior off as harmless.
 2. You must be careful in how you speak to one. **(Prov 26:4-5)**

IV. What will be the end of a fool?

- A. A fool will fall hard - **(Prov 10:8,10)**
- B. The best job for a fool is that of a slave - **(Prov 11:29)**
- C. A fool has no honor - **(Prov 26:1)**
- D. A fool will experience a life of beatings and turmoil - **(Prov 26:3)**
- E. In the judgment God will "Reward" the fool - **(Prov 26:10)**

Conclusion: Stay away from those who prove to be fools! **(Prov 23:9; 26:4-5)**

- A. Fools are not friends! **(Prov 13:19-20)**
 1. They will abandon you when you cease to prove useful.
 2. The parents of fools will lament. **(Prov 17:21,25)**
- B. Let us replace our immaturity with wisdom. **(Prov 19:1; Eph 5:15)**