

I. Folly Is Counterproductive (vv 8-10).**A.** The Fool is often consumed by their own folly

- 1)** *He who digs a pit will fall into it* (v 8a)
 - a)** The idea of digging a pit is found throughout the Scriptures, where the wicked set a trap for another (Psa 35:7-8)
 - b)** They may indeed be successful for a short time.
 - c)** But the just shall, in the end, triumph; and the wicked humbled or destroyed
- 2)** *He who quarries stones may be hurt by them* (9a) (Dt 19:14; Jdg 9:53; Psa 137:9).

B. Folly is always dangerous

- 1)** *And whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent* (v 8b) (Psa 80:12; Amos 5:19; 2 Sam 18:9).
- 2)** *And he who splits wood may be endangered by it* (v 9b) (Dt 19:4-5)
- 3)** Do you consider the consequences and judgment of your actions, both in this life and in the life to come? (Mk 8:36)

C. Folly is always tedious — *If the ax is dull, and one does not sharpen the edge, then he must use more strength; but wisdom brings success* (v 10)

- 1)** Explanation
- 2)** Illustrations/Applications — Anxiety (Mt 6:27) and Attempts to justify sin.
- 3)** Remedy — *But wisdom brings success*
 - a)** It is far better to be sharpened by being cut at by the Spirit through the Word.
 - b)** We must continue to stay sharpened by being diligent day by day to meditate on God's Word (Rom 8:37)

II. Folly Is Unpredictable (vv 11-14)

- A.** The folly of a babbler, of one who has no control over his words, is that he lashes out at anything — *A serpent may bite when it is not charmed; the babbler is no different* (v 11)
- B.** The babbler's many words will come back upon himself — *The lips of a fool shall swallow him up* (v 12b) (Pr 17:28)
- C.** The fool talks incessantly, and you never know what he is going to say — *The words of his mouth begin with foolishness, and the end of his*

talk is raving madness. A fool also multiplies words. No man knows what is to be; who can tell him what will be after him? (vv 13-14)

- 1)** Distinguish folly which is from infirmity, and folly which is from immorality.
 - a)** This babbling is this way with children, as well as those in their later years whose minds are beginning to fade. This is folly from ignorance. The remedy for this is instruction, patience, and forbearance (Pr 22:15; 1 Thes 5:14)
 - b)** But there is a maturity that is rightly demanded and expected of ourselves and others, and yet this is so often experienced. This is folly from immorality. The remedy for this is admonishment.
- 2)** How, then, are we to grow in maturity and please the Lord in our words?
 - a)** Begin by meditating on the right things (Phil 4:8)
 - b)** Examine your words before and as we speak:
 - i.** Is what I'm saying certain? (Eph 4:14-15, 25)
 - ii.** Is what I'm saying appropriate? (Eph 5:4, 6-10)
 - iii.** Is what I'm saying edifying? (Eph 5:29)
- D.** Folly is Unpredictable, but Grace is Superior!
 - 1)** *The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious* (v 12a) (Psa 45:2)
 - 2)** The work of the Spirit is even more unpredictable (from our view) than the babbling of a fool. (Jn 3:8)
 - 3)** The Lord is at work in us, making us new by the Holy Spirit (Jms 3:8)

III. Folly Is Wearisome (v 15)

- A.** The fool has no direction, even when it is obvious — *For they do not even know how to go to the city* (v 15b) (Dt 28:28-29)
- B.** This lack of direction and discretion is exhausting — *The labor of fools wearies them* (v 15a)
- C.** Uses from the Text
 - 1)** Jesus Christ is the Way, calling sinners to come to Him and find true and lasting rest.
 - 2)** What city are you traveling to? The City of Destruction, or the City of Zion?
 - 3)** Let us walk in the Light of God's Word, which directs our heart, soul, mind, and strength.