

BECOMING Wiser

Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do! And whatever else you do get, good judgment.
Proverbs 4:7

LESSON 2 // FOOLPROOFING YOUR LIFE

Proverbs 19:20 (NLT) *Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life.*

The way to make the “rest of your life” the “best of your life” is to become a wiser person. The opposite of wisdom is foolishness and, throughout the Bible, we see the stark contrast between wise and foolish people.

Become wiser involves becoming less foolish. What do you need to understand in order to be less foolish—to foolproof your life?

1. There is a difference between sinfulness and foolishness.

While all sin is certainly foolish, not everything that is foolish is necessarily sinful. However, foolish things often lead to sinful things.

2. Foolishness, like sin, has potential consequences.

We should be as fearful of foolishness as we are of sinfulness. Our lives and the lives of others around us can be severely damaged by foolishness.

The possibilities and potential of our lives can be hindered and forfeited by foolish decisions, personal habits, words, friendships, associations and actions. We can be derailed by foolish approaches to life management, health (spiritual, mental, emotional/psychological, physical and relational), finances and work patterns.

Much of the pain in our lives is the result of foolishness alone—or foolishness that leads to sinfulness.

Proverbs 19:3 (NLT) *People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord.*

In the Old Testament, Nabal and Abigail provide an example of the consequences of foolishness and the blessings of wisdom (see 1 Samuel 25). Nabal was a fool; Abigail was wise. Foolishness led to Nabal’s death. Wisdom led to Abigail becoming David’s wife.

Jesus taught us the difference between the wise and foolish person (Matthew 7:24-27; 25:1-13). He warned us that foolish living is dangerous living!

3. God helps the foolish and the sinful.

Everyone is sinful. We all sin against God (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6). If we are all sinners, we are also all foolish.

It's extremely important to understand God's perspective, attitude and actions toward fools. Here are some things you need to know about this:

- God loves and cares about fools and sinners (Romans 5:8).
- God forgives, saves and redeems fools and sinners (Acts 9:1-6).
- God rescues fools and sinners from their foolishness and sinfulness (Psalm 51:1, 2). This is called mercy!
- God educates fools and sinners in wise ways (Psalm 119:66).

4. We have to work to become wise.

Although God wants us to be wise, wisdom doesn't come without some work on our part. We have responsibilities in the process of becoming wiser.

Psalm 90:12 (NIV) *Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

Luke 2:52 (NIV) *And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NIV) *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*

Colossians 1:9, 10 (NIV) *For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.*

Foolproofing your life is part of the journey to becoming wiser. You must seek to become less foolish in order to grow in God's wisdom.

Discussion questions

1. Read Matthew 7:24-27 and 25:1-13. What does Jesus teach us in these passages about the difference between wise and foolish people?
2. How does God help foolish and sinful people? In what ways does this encourage you as you seek to become wiser?
3. Read Ephesians 5:15-17 and Colossians 1:9, 10. What do these verses tell you about your responsibilities in becoming wise? How should this make a difference in your life?