

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 14:1-18

1 The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down.

2 Whoever walks in uprightness fears the Lord, but he who is devious in his ways despises him.

3 By the mouth of a fool comes a rod for his back, but the lips of the wise will preserve them.

4 Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength of the ox.

5 A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies.

6 A scoffer seeks wisdom in vain, but knowledge is easy for a man of understanding.

7 Leave the presence of a fool, for there you do not meet words of knowledge.

8 The wisdom of the prudent is to discern his way, but the folly of fools is deceiving.

9 Fools mock at the guilt offering, but the upright enjoy acceptance.

10 The heart knows its own bitterness, and no stranger shares its joy.

11 The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish.

12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

13 Even in laughter the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.


14 The backslider in heart will be filled with the fruit of his ways, and a good man will be filled with the fruit of his ways.

15 The simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps.

16 One who is wise is cautious[d] and turns away from evil, but a fool is reckless and careless.

17 A man of quick temper acts foolishly, and a man of evil devices is hated.

18 The simple inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.



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DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 14:1-18

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When I get a new piece of equipment or tool, like many of you, I just want to go out and use it, thinking: "I know how to operate it correctly and get the most value out of it". Far too often I run into frustration because it doesn't work the way I expected, the job comes out poorly, or a total disaster happens. My foolishness could have been avoided if I had just read the instruction manual.

Foolishness can be defined as the rejection of God's truth and instruction, which leads to disaster. Proverbs has been specifically regarded as an instruction manual for wise living. So why would any reasonable person not avail themselves to such wisdom and knowledge?

These verses show the contrasting results of following wisdom or choosing foolishness on a variety of topics such as honesty, dishonesty, pride, mocking, bitterness, joy, laughter, and grief. If you follow God's way, versus following your own way, your chance of success is greatly improved. Relying on His wisdom is far better than our own. On the surface it seems simple, doing this avoids that, but figuring out which verse is the one that applies best is the trick, and abiding daily in His word will certainly get you off to a good start!

The world may have its wisdom and say that following God is foolish – that taking advantage, skirting the law, or just being clever will get you ahead. First Corinthians 3:18 says "Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become "fools" so that you may become wise." Let us all become fools for God's sake.

Questions:

1. What excuses do you tell yourself for not reading the manual?
2. Why not choose wisdom?
3. By whom are you willing to be known as foolish?