

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 26:1-12

1 Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool.

2 Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, a curse that is causeless does not alight.

3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the back of fools.

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself.

5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

6 Whoever sends a message by the hand of a fool cuts off his own feet and drinks violence.

7 Like a lame man's legs, which hang useless, is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

8 Like one who binds the stone in the sling is one who gives honor to a fool.

9 Like a thorn that goes up into the hand of a drunkard is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

10 Like an archer who wounds everyone is one who hires a passing fool or drunkard.

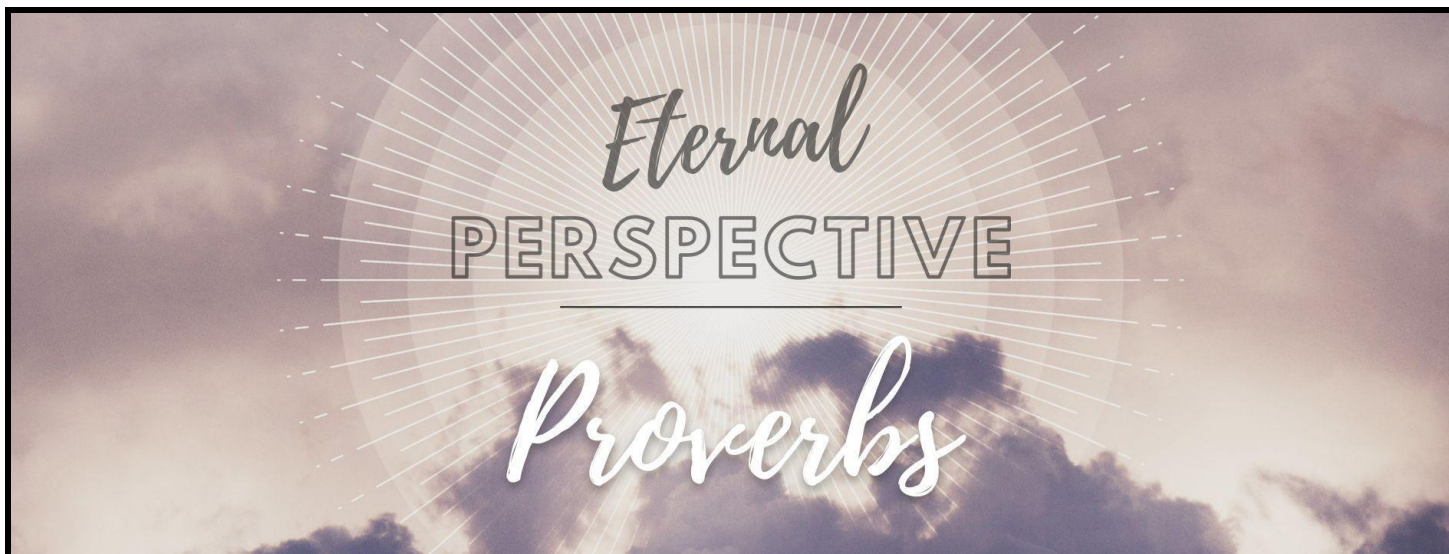
11 Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.

12 Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 26:1-12

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The specific proverbs in these verses remind us and warn us against foolishness. As I was reading these, I recognized many different characteristics given to fools. A fool can be a disaster of bad timing, and destructive. A fool can be restless, moving about speaking empty curses. A fool learns the hard way through pain. A fool wants to pull others into their foolish talk. You can't trust important information in the hands of a fool. A fool's possession of wisdom is useless. A fool's attempt to proclaim wisdom brings pain. A fool will display repetitive patterns of foolishness. A fool can be wise in their own eyes, and thus, become prideful. In all these traits of a fool, I am reminded that I am one



thought, or action away from being one myself. We all are one step away from being a fool. Why is that truth important?

If we do not have integrity or character to be trustworthy, how are others able to count on us? How are we to be a useful vessel in the Kingdom of God? How can a fool be helpful to anyone?

Solomon says in Proverbs 26:12 "Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him." Being prideful is more dangerous than being foolish. Being prideful is the epitome of foolishness. I often struggle with self-reliance, which stems from pride, sometimes thinking that I know best or that my plan is best. I'm not intentionally doing it. It's subtle; instead of going to God first for help, I tend to do things on my own. Then when it doesn't work out or I get stuck, I realize that I did not pray or ask for God's guidance.

Psalms 139:23-24 and Hebrews 4:12 have both been a blessing and gift to help me see the sin nature of my heart. These verses allow me to look into the mirror and examine myself with God's Word. When sin is revealed in me through God's Word, I can bring the sin into the light so I can be healed (James 5:16). Then, at that point, I can be a useful vessel for God's kingdom, and for others to count on.

"The greatest fool is the fool who does not know he is a fool." - G. Campbell Morgan

The word "pride" is used 55 times in the ESV version of the Bible. Pride is a blinder; it blurs out our sense of humility and only wants us to see what feeds our flesh. My prayer after reading through this passage is that I keep my heart in tune with the will of the Father, and not allow the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17) to blind me from being God's useful vessel for His glory, and for the good of others.

Questions:

1. Have you ever struggled with self-reliance? Have you ever considered yourself prideful?
2. Please read Psalms 139:23-24. I encourage you to read this each morning to self-reflect, and prepare your heart to be God's man or woman for His glory and the good of others.
3. Are there areas of your life that seem foolish? Please process this with your community, or trusted council in your life.