

# Four Classes of People

## “People, Wise and Otherwise!”

### (The Wise)

(From the Book of Proverbs)

The Book of Proverbs is basically about different kinds of people, what they believe, and how they interact with other people. In Proverbs chapters 1- 9, we casually meet five different kinds of people: **the wise, the wicked, the fool, the simple, and the scorner.**

What does God say about the **wise** man? What makes a person **wise**? Why are some **wise** and some **not so very wise**? What does it mean to be **wise**? Does it make any difference if I am **wise**, or just how important is it anyway?

### I. God Puts A Premium on Being Wise!

1. The entire book of Proverbs is a guide to attaining wisdom.
2. We are to be wise **“unto salvation.”** (II Tim. 3:15)
3. The wisest thing a person can do is to trust Christ as their Savior.
4. God has given us His BOOK, the Bible, that we might be wise. (Prov. 8; James 1:5; 3:14-18)

### II. Wise People Listen to Wise Instruction, Especially the Word of God:

1. **“A wise man will hear and will increase learning.”** (1:5)
2. Wise people pay attention to God’s Word. (4:7-13; 22:17-21; 23:23; 4:20-23)
3. This means we should diligently look for God’s wisdom for our lives. (2:1-8)
4. It is one thing to own a Bible, it is another thing **to apply our hearts unto wisdom.**

### III. Wise People Fear the Lord: (1:7)

1. **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”** (Prov. 1:7)
2. **“Fearing the Lord,”** means respecting Him so that we obey His will and seek to honor His name.
3. Fearing the Lord is the opposite of tempting the Lord by deliberately disobeying Him and daring Him to intervene. (Psa. 2:11) **“Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoicing with trembling.”**
4. The fear of the Lord is the **“fountain of life,”** (Prov. 14:27)
  - a. It leads to **life**, 19:23
  - b. it gives **security**, 14:26
  - c. it brings **hope**, 23:17-18
  - d. it brings the promise of **long life**, 10:27
  - e. it helps us to **steer away from evil**, 8:13; 16:6; 14:2

### IV. Wise People Associate With Wise People:

1. **“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.”** (Prov. 13:20) NKJV
2. A wise person will be careful who his friends are. (Prov. 12:26)
3. Whom we choose as friends makes a big difference.

## V. Wise People Flee From Sin:

1. ***“A wise man fears and departs from evil, but a fool rages and is confident.”*** (Prov. 14:16)
2. Wise people do not take unnecessary chances or do dumb things and think it does not matter.
3. God commands ***“Flee youthful lusts!”*** I Tim. 2:22)
4. Consider those who were self-confident:
  - a. Samson was self confident -- and lost his very life as he became a prisoner.
  - b. Peter was self-confident and -- then betrayed the Lord three times.

## VI. Wise People Discipline Their Speech:

1. ***“A wise man’s heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction.”***
2. ***“In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise.”*** (Prov. 10:4 NKJV)
3. The speech of wise people will instruct, inspire, bless, build up others, encourage, bring joy and peace. (Consider the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22-23)
4. The speech of the foolish tears down, hurts, destroys, and leaves you empty and discouraged.

## VII. God Makes Promises To Wise People:

1. They will inherit glory. (Prov. 3:35)
2. They bring joy to others. (10:1; 15:20)
3. They bring help from God. (12:18)
  - a. Discord and disunity are terrible sins because they are contrary to the spiritual unity for which Jesus prayed. (John 17:21)
  - b. The Holy Spirit was given to produce unity among those who are saved. (Eph. 4:1-6)
  - c. God’s wisdom is clearly seen in James 4:13-18, as well as the wisdom of the unsaved or of the worldly.

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### (The Wicked)

(Book of Proverbs)

The **wicked** and their **wickedness** is mentioned at least 100 times in the Book of Proverbs. Usually it is given in contrast to the righteous. Proverbs 6:12-19 is somewhat of a summary statement that describes the evil person and the hateful sins that he commits.

### I. THE WICKED ARE “NAUGHTY” *that is . . .*

1. They are worth nothing, they are without profit.
2. It is a Hebrew word that describes the wicked as worthless people. (Deut. 13:13; Judges 19:22; I Sam. 25:25; I Kings. 21:10, 13)
3. Sin is not only destructive, it is unproductive.
4. Every part of the wicked person's **anatomy** is **devoted to evil** and his “*body language*” communicates evil. (See Rom. 3:10-18).
  - a. His **mouth** is perverse, a word that means “*crooked, twisted.*” He can't be trusted.
  - b. When he wants to signal his companions that it's time to do evil, he winks with his eyes, shuffles his feet, and motions with his fingers; they get the message.
  - c. The cause of all this evil is the perversity of his inner person, for it is out of his heart that evil comes. (Mark 7:14-23; Jer. 17:9)
  - d. He's skillful at plotting evil; a troublemaker.
5. He is under judgment for it is certain to come when he least expects it.
6. How much better to yield the body to God (Rom. 12:1; 6:13) and be controlled by His Word. (Prov. 4:20-27)

### II. THE WICKED PRACTICE MANY SINS:

1. They live in pride. (Prov. 8:13)
  - a. Pride is a basic motivation for all sins.
  - b. It was **pride** that turned Lucifer into Satan. (Isa. 14:12-14) and that led Eve to disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. (“*You will be as God.*”) The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth. (Prov. 8:13)
2. They practice lying and deception.
  - a. God sees a lie, not as an act of speech, but as a deadly force that goes to work in society and divides and destroys.
  - b. God is a God of truth ---- (Deut. 32:4; Jh. 14:6; I Jh. 5:6) and His Law says, “*Thou shalt not bear false witness.*” (Exod. 20:16)
  - c. When we lie, we open the door for Satan to work for He is a liar (John 8:44); when we speak truth we give opportunity for the Spirit to work. (Eph. 4:14-25)

3.They have a heart that devises wicked schemes:

- a. This is **hateful** to God because it's a misuse of a great gift of imagination that He gives us.
- b. Our imaginations must be under God's control lest we walk in sin.  
(Gen. 6: ; II Cor. 10:3-5)
- c. Only God can change the sinful heart. (Heb. 10:14-18; Psa. 51:10)
- d. The imagination is the "*womb*" out of which either evil or good is born.  
Guard against evil. (Prov. 4:23)

4.They have feet that are swift to run to mischief:

a. They fulfill their schemes quickly and enjoy their sinful pleasures.

- God desires for us to have cleansed feet -- Jh 13
- to have prepared feet -- Eph. 6:15
- to have obedient feet -- Josh 1:3; 3:15
- to have beautiful feet -- Rom. 10:14-15

b. They tempt others into sinful ways (Prov. 5:5) and break God's laws.  
(Prov. 1:10-16)

5.They sow discord among the brethren:

- a. (Psa. 133:1) God desires for us to dwell in peace and unity.
- b. The wicked destroys that unity by sowing seeds of discord that produce a bitter and divisive harvest. (Prov. 6)

- they sow seeds of pride -- Prov. 13:10
- seeds of gossip -- Prov. 16:28; 17:9; 18:8, 26:20)
- seeds of anger and hatred -- Prov. 10:12; 15:18; 29:22)
- seeds of a quarrelsome spirit -- 17:14, 19; 25:8)

***The truly godly person will sow seeds of unity, peace, joy, peace, love and all the fruit of the Spirit.*** (Gal. 5:2-23)

7.The pages of religious and political history are full of the records of the **deeds of proud mockers who wouldn't listen to wise counsel.** . .

8.They will not heed God's Word -- but they believe their own lies!  
(James 3:13-18)

9.Scoffers are "*an abomination to men,*" and to God. (Prov. 24:9)

- a. "*The Lord scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble.*" (3:34)
- b. Consider James 4:6 and I Peter 5:5!
- c. "*Judgments are prepared for the scoffers!*" ( 19:29) Because mockers mock God, God will mock the scorners or scoffers!

*God will judge the scorner -- those who are wise in their own conceits will find themselves under condemnation before a holy God.*

**Consider these portions: Proverbs 9:4; 9:8; 13:1; 14:6; 15:12; 19:25; 21:11; 21:24 and Isa. 29:20**

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### (The Simple and the Scorners)

(Book of Proverbs)

Much more could be said about the wicked and the wise but now **we turn to the simple and the scorner!** You will meet these frequently in the book of Proverbs! In Wisdom’s first invitation, Wisdom called to all three -- the **simple, scorner, and the fool** -- Prov. 1:22) In Wisdom’s second invitation, Wisdom called out only to the **simple** and the **fool**. The **scorner** wasn’t even interested in listening. . . the **scorner** had dropped out of the picture. (8:5)

In the third invitation, Wisdom called only to the **simple** (9:4) because **fools** had turned away and joined the **scorners**.

***It is dangerous to reject God’s invitation to walk in the path of wisdom and life. . . you may never get another opportunity!!***

### I. What Are The Simple Like?

1. The simple are **naive people** who believe everything because **they do not have convictions** about anything.
2. They **lack the ability to discern** (or discriminate) between truth and error.
3. What they think is sophisticated “*tolerance*” is only spiritual ignorance. **They think themselves wise about most everything -- while they understand little.** A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.
4. **They lack common sense.**
5. In our day it **seems to be popular** to be *open- minded, and uncritical of what other people think or believe!*
6. **They insist that there is no such thing as objective truth-** - - according to them, **whatever “feels good,” down inside is truth for you.**
7. **They feel no one should ever criticize another person for what they believe** - - - for what is truth anyway -- is their thought! They lack knowledge of truth!
8. **The simple are simple in God’s terms because they reject the truth of God’s Word** that gives prudence (common sense) to the simple. (1:4)

**See Proverbs: 1:4; 1:22; 1:32; 7:7; 8:5; 9:4; 9:13; 9:16; 14:15; 14:18; 19:25; 21:11; 22:3; 27:12**

### II. What Does God Say About The Scorners?

1. **Scorners think they know everything,** and anybody who tries to teach them is only wasting time. *“Proud and haughty scorner (scoffer) is his name!”* (21:24)
2. **Scorners cannot find wisdom** even if they seek it, because learning God’s truth demands a **humble heart and an obedient mind.** (14:6)
3. Instead of sensibly discussing a matter with those who could teach them, **they only sneer at truth and deny it. God calls them “frivolous and impudent.”**
4. Since **they have little spiritual ability,** the scorner depends on ridicule and contempt to fight his enemies.
5. **Scorners show how ignorant they are** by the way they respond to advice and reproof. *“He who reproves a scorner gets shame for himself. . . do not reprove a scoffer, lest he hate you; rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.”* (Prov. 9:7-8)

*“A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke!”*  
(13:1)

*“A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise.”* (15:12)

When you try to teach a scorner, you are casting pearls before swine!

6. **Scorners cause all kinds of trouble** wherever they go -- whether in the neighborhood, on the job, or in the church or school -- the scorner is **toxic** and **he spreads his scoffing attitudes like a disease!**

*“Cast out the scorner and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease!”* (22:10)

Mockers (scorners) stir up a city, but wise men turn away wrath.

**Scorners stir up people like fanning the flames of a burning building. . . bringing damage and loss!**