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# Avoiding Foolishness

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# Avoiding Foolishness

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*Fearing the LORD is the beginning of discernment, but fools have despised wisdom and moral instruction.*  
(Proverbs 1:7)

The Hebrew word that most frequently occurs in *Proverbs* to designate “fool” and “folly” signifies weakness but perhaps it could be best translated as “infatuation with things that are unwise.” Solomon also uses the word “fool” to designate moral as well as mental stupidity and “folly” is the lack of sensibility to all that is true and good. The term “fool” is also used in Proverbs to connote a senseless person or one who is nothing but trouble.

The goal of education is to rid one of infatuation and intrigue with unwise things. Some people, however, are bent toward pursuits which are denigrating and destructive and they are not willing to be educated as to the things of wisdom. Wise people are always learning and growing rich from the experience, whereas the infatuation of senseless men is infatuation still. (Proverbs 14:24)

In the second connotation of “fool,” which appears in the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter so frequently, there is a spiritual lethargy and dullness. It is insensibility and insensitivity toward the wisdom of God. It is absolute foolishness to deny God’s existence; the true fool either ignores the ample evidence of the existence of God or, noting that evidence, refuses to live by God’s standards. It is further foolishness to believe that one can live apart from God, the creator and sustainer of all things. We are to live in God and God is to live in us as the sponge is in the water and the water is in the sponge. Fools do not even acknowledge their need for the Lord but the wise person acknowledges it and seeks reconciliation. (Proverbs 14:9)

Foolish actions are only temporarily pleasing. The associated “happiness” is short-lived. In Proverbs 9:1-18, Folly is a prostitute serving her guests stolen food. Whereas wisdom appeals first to the mind; Folly appeals only to the senses. The pleasures of Folly are transient; however, the satisfactions of Wisdom are eternal.

What do you regard as the “supreme good” of life? What are you doing to accomplish your chief goals? What are your weaknesses? Are any of your present ways foolish – morally unwise or spiritually dull?