



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

A Leader Cannot be Foolish!

OCTOBER 5, 2011

Dave DePue / (785) 249 7604 / www.capitolcom.org / dave.depue@capitolcom.org

This study/devotional is prepared for government leaders in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of Kansas government. We trust that these summary notes are inspiring and encouraging.

INTRODUCTION

Webster defines folly as: Conduct contrary to the laws of God or man; scandalous crimes; action which violates moral precepts and dishonors the offender.¹ The Hebrew root is *ksil*, translated nearly fifty times in the Scriptures for each of our terms “fool” and “folly”.

DON'T ASSOCIATE WITH FOLLY

*Proverbs 9:13-18 The woman Folly is loud; she is undisciplined and without knowledge. She sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the highest point of the city, calling out to those who pass by, who go straight on their way. "Let all who are simple come in here!" she says to those who lack judgment. "Stolen water is sweet; food eaten in secret is delicious!" But little do they know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of the grave.*²

Folly and wisdom are complete opposites. The Scriptures contrast these as women who beckon the traveler on the highway to success.

ATTRIBUTES OF WISDOM

A quick scan of Wisdom's attributes finds the following terms: Blessed, common sense, counsel, diligent, discretion, faultless, hard working, honor, insight, integrity, judgment, justice, knowledge, life, noble, power, prosperity, prudence, righteous, riches, truth, understanding, wealth, wholesome, and wise.

ATTRIBUTES OF FOLLY

The following terms are found or implied in the text describing Folly: Arrogance, crookedness, death, enticement, evil, grave, loud, immoral, perverse, pride, secrecy, slovenliness, stealing, undisciplined, wickedness, and without knowledge. The fool commits folly. They reject the first principle of wisdom, the reverence or fear of the Lord (1Samuel 25:17). Moral insolence is a common sign of a fool. *Fools mock at sin* (Proverbs 14:9).

TESTED BY FOLLY – BLESSED BY WISDOM

Genesis Chapters 37-50 reports the story of Joseph, a young man beckoned by both wisdom and folly. Sold into slavery at age seventeen, he became the servant of an Egyptian named Potiphar. Joseph proved to be hard working, trustworthy, and blessed by God. By his mid-twenties, Joseph was promoted to manager of all Potiphar's property and served as his Chief of Staff. Many tests of character were certainly passed during these years. Folly, in the person of his master's wife, tested Joseph by seduction. Spurned, she accused Joseph of immoral conduct. He was imprisoned but trusted to serve as assistant warden. God intervened and Pharaoh appointed Joseph Governor over Egypt at the age of thirty, serving until he was 110 years old.

Note the dismal options for Joseph: Without wisdom, he could expect a relatively short life of servitude and anonymous burial in a foreign land. With folly, Joseph would certainly have been executed while in his twenties. The probabilities may not be as dramatic for you and me. However, the options of wisdom or folly are very real for us.

CONCLUSION

The temptations are real! Folly promises **short cuts** and **quick advancement**. Enticements include pleasure, an easier road to prosperity, notoriety, and an illusion of security. Shaun Lewis, our Illinois Capitol pastor, sadly reflects on the four governors and 1,500 public officials who were convicted of some form of public corruption since the late 1960's. Folly's victims fall quickly and are destined for the grave, ultimately Sheol (Hebrews 11:25).

A Prayer:

My Lord God, I ask for wisdom in the choices that come before me. Help me to build hedges that distance me from enticements, temptations and excessive ambition. Keep me accountable to You and others important in my life. Bless my service here. I ask this in the Name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

¹ Noah Webster. American Dictionary of the English Language. (Webster) 1828.

² The Holy Bible, New International Version (International Bible Society). 1978.

DEVOTIONAL DISCUSSION

LEADERSHIP/STAFF/GUESTS: WEDNESDAYS 12 NOON, GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM: 264 WEST