

# Relationships With Fools Part 1

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon discusses the biblical definition of a fool, how to deal with fools, and the dangers of sending a fool to carry a message, as well as the characteristics of a lazy person and the importance of not meddling in strife.*

**Duration:** 25:06

**Scripture:** Proverbs 26:1, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Relationships"

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## Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the importance of not binding the stone in a sling, as it will prevent it from reaching its target. He compares this foolish act to giving honor to a fool. Pastor Chuck also mentions the insensitivity of fools to parables, likening it to a drunkard who is insensitive to pain. He encourages listeners to hold onto the truth that God has already gone before them and will do wonders in their lives. The sermon concludes with Pastor Chuck discussing relationships with fools and the laziness of the slothful man.

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## Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul  
Oh, let Him have the things that mold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole  
And now with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Now, going back to pick up chapter 26 in Proverbs, which we inadvertently skipped. The 26th chapter of Proverbs, and remember now, beginning with chapter 25, these particular Proverbs were compiled by the order of Hezekiah.

He had his scribes gather together some of the Proverbs of Solomon. And it would seem that in chapter 26, they sort of grouped the Proverbs by theme. And the first theme that is covered is that of a fool.

And most of the Proverbs in the first part of chapter 26 refer to the fool. Beginning with verse 13, he then addresses the Proverbs of Solomon, what Solomon had to say about the lazy man. And then he ends the chapter, or they ended the chapter, with the Proverbs of Solomon that dealt with the strife and the problems that can be created by the tongue of man.

By lies, by deceit, by tail bearing, the problems that come from the tongue of a man. So, those are the three basic categories. Solomon's observations concerning the fool.

Now, as we get into Solomon's observation concerning the fool, I think that it is important to get a biblical definition of a fool. And the biblical definition of a fool is the man who has said in his heart, there is no God. So, the man who lives without an awareness or consciousness of God, that man is a fool.

A man who seeks to govern and direct his own life without seeking the guidance of God, that man is a fool. The man who says in his heart, there is no God, and thus he doesn't live by the standards or the rules that God has set. For he lives a godless life.

So, as snow in the summer, which is quite inappropriate, wouldn't mind a bit, but it's inappropriate. And as rain in harvest, and that's bad. Rain in the time of harvest will cause the grain to mildew.

And to sour. So, honor is not seemly for a fool. To grant honor to a fool is about as good as it is to have rain in the harvest.

It just is inappropriate. It doesn't fit. Snow in summer just doesn't fit.

So, honor is not befitting to a fool. Now, this one is away from the subject of the fool, but the rest of them, all through verse 12, revert back to the fool. But as the bird by wandering, and as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

Have you ever watched a swallow in flight? They never fly straight. Now, there are some birds, when they fly, they pretty much fly in a straight line. Watch this seagull.

He's flying in a straight line. Sparrows pretty much fly in a straight line. Crows fly in a straight line.

But not swallows. Their flight is very erratic. As you see a swallow flying, you have no idea where he's going.

I don't know that he has any idea of where he's going. Their flight pattern is quite erratic. And the bird by wandering.

I've often wondered where birds think they're going. You know, you see them flying, and you wonder, do they really know where they're going? And as the bird by wandering, the swallow by flying, there seems to be no real purpose or intent, so the curse that is causeless shall not come. A lot of people are worried about someone having put a hex on them, someone having put a curse on them.

A curse causeless will not happen. It will not come. Someone curses, you don't need to worry about it.

Someone sticks pins in a doll. You don't have to worry about it. A curse causeless will not come.

Now, back to the fool. A whip for the horse, keep him in line. A bridle for the ass, again, to keep him in line.

So the rod for a fool's back, in order to keep him in line. They have to be harnessed. They cannot just be allowed that freedom of going.

They have to be kept in tow. So the fool. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou become like unto him.

If some fool makes some foolish retort to you, or makes some foolish, I guess, tort to you, and you give a foolish retort, it isn't wise to answer a fool according to his folly. If he makes some just totally radical statement, then you make some totally radical statement back. You become like him.

You're saying foolish things. So if you answer a fool according to his folly, you become just like him. You are just as guilty as he is of just uttering nonsense.

Now, it would seem that the next proverb is contradictory to this. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit. Now, there is a difference between the two.

In this case, when a fool makes a foolish remark, don't answer him with foolishness, but do give to him a proper answer, or else he'll think he's stumped you. And you go around in conceit thinking that, you know, he is so wise he has put you to shame and all. So give him an answer, but not according to his folly.

Don't give him a stupid answer or a foolish answer, but just a reasonable answer by which you sort of close his mouth. So when he comes out with his folly, go ahead and answer him, because if you don't, then he's going to become wise in his own conceit. Now, he who sends a message by the hand of the fool cuts off the feet, and he's drinking damage.

If you send a fool out to carry a message for you, you'd be better off to send a fellow without any feet. He's apt to get the message all twisted, and you'll be in worse shape than if they never got the message, because they probably won't get the message right anyhow. So he's not to be relied upon or trusted in bearing a message.

The legs of the lame are not equal, an interesting proverb. So is a parable in the mouth of fools. It just doesn't balance.

A fool doesn't understand a parable, and they will misinterpret a parable. As he that binds a stone in a sling, so is he that gives honor to the fool. In other words, the sling has a little leather pouch with the two leather straps.

The one leather strap is longer than the first, and with the longer strap you wrap it around your hand. The shorter strap you hold with your two fingers, and then you put the stone in the pouch, and you get that thing swinging until you get a good rhythm, and then you bring it over your head, and you let go of the shorter leather thong, and the stone goes out of the pouch and towards its target. Now, one of the most ridiculous things you could do would be to tie the stone in the pouch, because it'll never go anywhere.

So that is the idea here. A person who would bind the stone in a sling. It's just as foolish as the man who would give honor to a fool.

I think of the Hollywood Emmys. As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, he's insensitive to it. So is a parable in the mouth of fools.

They're insensitive to it. A man who, when he's drunk, doesn't seem to feel pain, he loses that sensitivity. So with a fool, a parable in his mouth.

He's insensitive. The great God that formed all things both rewards the fool and rewards the transgressors. In other words, the transgressors and the fools are one day going to stand before the God whose existence they deny.

The great God that formed all things, he's going to reward the fool, and he's going to reward the transgressors. That person who says there is no God, one day is going to meet God. The great God who made all things, created all things, he's going to stand before him.

As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool returns to his folly. It is a sickening thing, but dogs do that. When they get sick, they'll usually eat grass, and then they'll regurgitate whatever it is that was causing their problem.

And then, after a while, you see them over licking and eating the regurgitation. Yuck. But you just can't keep a fool away from his folly.

It's yucky, but he returns to it. See a man who is wise, and here's the interesting about the fool, there's only one thing worse in the Proverbs here, one thing worse than a fool, and that's a man who is wise in his own conceits. See a man who is wise in his own conceits, there's more hope for a fool than there is for him.

So, man, he sort of waits till the end, and he gives a real whammer, you know. All of these things about the fool, and then there's only one thing worse, a conceited person, wise in their own conceits. Think they're so wise.

Now we turn from the fool to the lazy person, the slothful man who says, there's a lion out in the path. A lion is in the streets. That is, his excuse for not going to work is that he might be attacked by a lion.

Benjamin Franklin made an interesting statement. I guess it would classify as a proverb. He said, a man who is good at making excuses is seldom good for anything else.

And so, any excuse not to work. And so, the slothful man says, oh, there's a lion out there. There's a lion in the street.

So, he uses that as an excuse not to go out to work. I like this one. As the door turneth on its hinges, so the slothful or the lazy man on his bed won't get out of bed, you know.

He lies on one side till he gets too tired, then he rolls over on the other side like a door turning on its hinges, you know. He goes back and forth on the bed. The slothful man hides his hand in his bosom.

I don't want to get out of bed. It's cold outside. So, he gets up.

He puts his hands in his bosom, you know. I can't work. It's too cold.

My hands are cold, you know. So, the slothful man hides his hands in his bosom. It's a pain to him even to bring.

Now, that's really lazy. When you get too lazy to eat, it becomes a pain to bring them to his mouth. Boy, I tell you, when you get that lazy, you're almost gone.

The sluggard or the lazy man is wiser in his own conceit. That is, he thinks he's wiser than seven men who can give you a reason. They can give you a reason to go to work.

But he thinks that he's wise because he's learned how to escape work. And he thinks he's a lot wiser than you. So, you, you know, go to work, foolish man.

I've learned to get by without working, you know. So, he's wiser in his own conceit than seven men who can render reason. Now, meddling by words and by actions.

He that passes by and meddles with strife that doesn't belong to him. You see a fight going on, and boy, you get out and get in the middle of it. You meddle with strife that doesn't really belong.

You have no business in it. It doesn't belong to you. You're like one who takes the dog by his ears.

You're apt to get snapped. As a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death. Now, see here now.

You've got a guy who's crazy. Throwing firebrands, shooting arrows, death. Indiscriminate, just throwing them.

So is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, aren't I really a sport? Because you have deceived your neighbor, you think you're smart, you think you're clever and all. You're like a man so foolish as to just throw firebrands and arrows. Where there is no wood, the fire goes out.

So where there is no tailbearer, the strife ceases. How many times people keep... Well, the newspapers are great for this. They get an issue that becomes a hot public issue, and they won't let it die.

You know, every paper they'll have to have somewhere. And they don't give you any more... They rehash old information, and they just go back over and over the old stuff, but they always put the name out there because it's hot news right now. And they keep the whole issue stirred.

There are people like that. They won't let a thing die. They have to go out and tell someone else.

But where there is no wood, the fire will go out. If you don't have a tailbearer, then the strife will stop. It'll come to an end.

It just dies out. As coals are to burning coals and wood to fire, that is, they are feeding the fire, the wood. Coals feed the burning coals, keep them going.

So is a contentious man to kindle strife. You get a contentious man, he's like wood to a fire. He just keeps the thing going, causes it to blaze up.

The words of a tailbearer are as wounds. They go down into the innermost part of a person. Words of a tailbearer, they're cut, they destroy.

They destroy inwardly, those emotional cuts. I often wonder what is worse, physical abuse or emotional abuse. And many people are subjected to emotional abuse by the tongue of people.

And it hurts, it hurts deeply, down in the deepest part. You're cut, you're bleeding, you're hurting because of vicious things that have been said. And sometimes I think that those emotional hurts take a lot longer to heal than a physical hurt.

I cut myself and, you know, almost immediately the little blood platelets are formed and they seal up the bleeding and the thing stops in just a few minutes, it's bleeding. Then the healing process begins and in a few days you can't even see where you cut yourself. It's over.

You're healed. But some of those inward cuts, those cutting things that were said, they just seem to hold on month after month into the years. They continue to hurt.

And so the wounds of a tailbearer are wounds that go down deep into the innermost part of a person's being. Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd that's covered with silver dross, the slag of silver

covering over a potshred, which is a broken piece of pottery, but yet it's covered with silver. So burning lips and a wicked heart.

You can gloss over, but it's just clay underneath. He that hates dissembles with his lips and he lays up deceit within him. Hatred, a horrible thing, it is destructive to the person who hates and it is destructive to the person who is hated.

But if you hate, then you use your lips to bring discord. You use your lips to separate, to dissemble. But when he speaks fair, don't believe him.

The man that hates you, he says, oh my, you look so nice today. Watch out. Believe him not.

For there are seven abominations in his heart. They flatter you to soften you up. Watch out for the flattery of the person who hates you, whose hatred is covered by deceit.

His wickedness shall be shown before the whole congregation. Jesus said that which is spoken in secret shall be shouted from the housetops. There is really no secret sin.

God is aware and God knows. God will reveal. You try to cover your hatred by deceit, but yet it will out.

It will be seen, it will be known. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse venture through the Bible in our next broadcast as Pastor Chuck continues his study through the book of Proverbs. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us.

But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you'd like to secure a copy of today's message, simply order Proverbs 26, verse 1, when visiting [thewordfortoday.org](http://thewordfortoday.org). And while you're there, we encourage you to browse the many additional biblical resources by Pastor Chuck. You can also subscribe to the Word for Today podcast or sign up for our email subscription. Once again, all this can be found at [thewordfortoday.org](http://thewordfortoday.org). If you wish to call, our toll-free number is 1-800-272-WORD.

And our office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Once again, that's 1-800-272-9673. For those of you preferring to write, our mailing address is The Word for Today, P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628.

And now, on behalf of The Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support. And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck continues his verse-by-verse study through the Bible. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today.

And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck with today's closing comments. God bless you, and may the Lord guide you in His plan for your life. And may you learn, as David, to just commit your ways unto the Lord, knowing that the Lord will take care of things as you just submit your life, its facets, unto Him.

And may God just continue to use you as His instrument in bringing His love to a needy world. I just got The Word for Today Bible, and I'm really enjoying the commentaries by Pastor Chuck. Listen to this one from the book of Joshua.

You see, God has already gone before me. God is already there tomorrow. Joshua is telling them, tomorrow, God is going to do wonders in your eyes.

And that's the thing that I need to hold in my mind. Yeah, that's really good. I have one too from the book of Nehemiah.

So they read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and then they gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading. That's what expository teaching is all about. That's what we have devoted our ministry to, the study of God's Word.

The Word for Today Bible is available in leather and paperback editions with more commentaries by Pastor Chuck, simply teaching the Word of God. For more information, please call The Word for Today at 1-800-272-WORD. You can read a preview of The Word for Today Bible by visiting [thewordfortoday.org](http://thewordfortoday.org). This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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