

# ***EVEN A TINY BIT OF FOOLISHNESS IS DANGEROUS***

**APRIL 2, 2006 - ECCLESIASTES 10:1-20 - Lesson 11**

**MEMORY VERSE: *Ecclesiastes 10:1, "Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench; so a little folly***

## **INTRODUCTION**

*Verse one of chapter 10 serves as a thesis statement for this week's study. Solomon is essentially communicating that dead flies are to perfume as a bit of foolishness is to the reputation of a wise person. Even as believer's in Jesus Christ, we are not exempt from making unwise and foolish decisions that may result in consequences we did not desire or expect. When we attempt to go through this life in our own wisdom or strength, in even the small seemingly insignificant areas of life, the results of this decision making can often bring about consequences that are detrimental and destructive. It is like a person who is trying to navigate to a specific location by using a compass. He must stay on target to arrive at his location successfully. If he begins his journey just one degree off and does not discern his error, he will miss his final destination by a huge margin. This principal is extremely important for us to grasp in regards to sin in our lives. Even the "smallest" sin we choose to indulge can have a huge impact not only on us, but on everyone around us.*

*For ease in studying this chapter, we have broken the "Understanding the Text" portion into four distinct sections. Verses 4-7 will deal with "Foolish Leaders," verses 8-11 address "Foolish Workers," verses 12-15 discuss "Foolish Talkers," and verses 16-20 deal with "Foolish Officers."*

## **UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT**

### **Foolish Leaders**

- 1. In verse 4, explain in your own words the wise advice Solomon gives us concerning how to deal with angry rulers? Why is this approach an effective way to deal with leaders who are angry?*
  
- 2. What are the ironic situations described in verses 5-7? Why do these type of situations often occur in life?*

### **Foolish Workers**

- 1. In verses 8-11, what was the weakness that each of these workers had in common? What might they have done to prevent these situations from occurring?***
  
- 2. Explain in your own words the wisdom Solomon is giving workers in verse 10.***

### **Foolish Talkers**

- 1. In verses 12 - 15, how can a fool's words betray him? Who is ultimately hurt the most by the words of a fool? Why?***
  
- 2. A fool is often unbridled in his speech. In other words, he uses a lot of words and boasts about things like the future, which no man can know. How does this impact the way others view him?***

### **Foolish Officers**

- 1. In verses 16-19, list some of the characteristics of a foolish, immature official who has been placed in a position of leadership. What do you think will eventually happen to the organization and people he oversees?***
  
- 2. What is the wise advice Solomon offers in verse 20? Why is this type of foolish behavior so destructive to the individual and the organization?***

## **OUR WALK WITH GOD**

- 1. When have you observed people who have destroyed a great reputation by making a single mistake? How do you think this occurred? What was the impact on the individual and those who followed him/her? How can you prevent yourself from falling into this same trap?***
  
- 2. Each of us is a leader, or has the potential to be a leader, in some area of our lives. What are some of the specific principals and truths you have learned from each of the sections of this study that you can apply to your leadership?***

***Foolish Rulers -***

***Foolish Workers -***

***Foolish Talkers -***

***Foolish Officers -***

## **GOING DEEPER**

- 1. Read Exodus 22:28; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17. What do these passages reveal to us concerning God's standards for respecting those He has placed in authority over us?***
  
- 2. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-25. From these verses, list the principals that can help you from falling into the folly of sin. Discuss why each of these is so important in guarding against sin creeping into your life.***

## **ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK**

***“The best rulers are men and women who are tough-minded but tenderhearted, who put the best people on the horses and don’t apologize for it.”***

**Warren Wiersbe**

***“Wisdom is a whole lot better than any amount of brilliance, strength, or looks. But even wisdom is not good if you don’t use it.”***

**Tommy Nelson**

***“Little things come daily, hourly, within our reach, and they are not less calculated to set forward our growth in holiness, than are the greater occasions which occur but rarely. Moreover, fidelity in trifles, and an earnest seeking to please God in little matters, is a real test of devotion and love. Let your aim be to please our dear Lord perfectly in little things.”***

**French priest Jean Nicolas Grou**

***“We have two ears and one mouth; therefore we should listen twice as much as we talk.”***

**Ancient philosopher Zeno**

***“In what field of life are you a leader? In the home? At work? In a role at church? If you’re wise, you’ll realize that you never stand alone before God; with you stand the souls of those you lead. Your stewardship of these souls is an issue with eternal consequences - a heaven-on-earth issue. Remember, that a good leader walks ahead of his people, to point the way; beside his people, to share in their journey; and behind his people, to protect them and cover their mistakes. In other words, he leads in the same way Christ leads us. So as Christ covers us, and we cover those we lead, we make our way forward in wisdom and eagerness for all that God has in store.”***

**David Jeremiah, “Searching for Heaven on Earth”**