



1 Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands. 2 He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him. 3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them. 4 Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox. 5 A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies. 6 A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth. 7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge. 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit. 9 Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour. (Proverbs 14:1-9)

The 14th Chapter of Proverbs may be broken down into several sections - all inter-related. Part I of our study today will include verses 1-9, the contrasting characters of the wise and foolish. The chapter opens with a reference to a woman building a house. While it is true that a man might build a house as well, or better, than a woman, only a woman can convert a mere house into a blessed home. ***1 Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.*** A wise man will build his house upon a rock, anchoring its foundation solidly upon that sure foundation. The foolish man does not consider the foundation of any importance - he is only concerned about APPEARANCE. ***Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which***

built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. (Matt 7:24-27) Wherein does the wise man and the wise woman (as described herein) differ?

The physical stability and security of the house does not make it a home. The woman builds on the house that the man has made, filling the chambers from top to bottom with loveliness. She decorates the plain walls with beautiful art and classical decor. She fills the rooms with the aroma of baked bread and the porch with the fragrance of flowers. The house is no longer a house, but has become also a home where little children are loved and nurtured in the Word of God at the knee of a dutiful mother. Though the house may be built upon a rock, and not upon the sand, a foolish woman can cause it to become very much like the fallen house that had no foundation - because a house, in order to be a home, needs both a physical AND a spiritual foundation. It is this spiritual foundation of WISDOM which makes the place whole. Wisdom is closely related to the more refined side of womanhood.

2 He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him. The reason that a fool is always at the center of disputes, accidents, and turmoil is owing to the fact that he is a fool! He pays no mind to warning of life, or the rules of the Road of Life. He is reckless and careless in all things. He may even labor hard to acquire a dream, but see it fall with the tide of the sea. The righteous man or woman walks in the admonition of the Lord who made them. They read the warning signs God has provided along the way and fear to go out of the way of safety in God. The demons of the valley and mountain cliff lurk just beyond the limits that God has set for righteous living. So we walk in the way of security and safety if we walk according to God's Commandments given out of love and not to spoil our joy. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* (Psalms 119:105) That light of God's Word reveal dangerous pitfalls and hazardous poisons in our way.

3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them. There are many boastful' fools riding the convoy to the frontlines, but tremble in fear at the sight of the battle. They speak with prideful words and swelling conceit, but then are forced to swallow the large and indigestible words of their pride when the battle streamers are lifted. Their words are pride become their rods of reproach at the moment of truth. The wise will measure his words and couch them in humility. If he proves a greater soldier in battle than he is expected to be, he has no pride to swallow, but he has a sense of satisfaction of duty performed as God has given him the Light to see that duty.

4 Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox. In a nation of cowards, peace may rule supreme; but that peace comes at the cost of chains. It is easy to maintain an orderly office if no work is ever done there. In a free society, there may be much debate and contention, but the goal of liberty rules in the hearts of the people. In a communist dictatorship, there is no contention without the cost of death. How far have we gone in this last direction as a nation. Dialogue is stifled at the threat of political correctness. Comfort is purchased at the coast of forfeited freedoms. The earnings of others are given to those who labor not, and this number will always feed on itself. At a National Park in a western state, there is a very telling sign posted at the entrance which reads, "Please do not feed the animals - it will make them dependent!" What am I missing here? God laid down a steadfast rule in Eden at the fall of our Federal parents: *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.* (Gen 3:19)

5 A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies. A dedicated liar will climb the pole to tell a lie when he could more comfortably simply stand on the ground and tell the truth. Since facts are no concern to him, the liar is limitless in the dimensions of his deceit. A faithful witness speaks of truth and therefore has no reason to lie. In our political world today, a faithful witness has no chance of success in politics. He cannot stand the withering deceit that his opponent pours down upon him with the cooperation of an agenda-driven press. So those who are righteous are the favored citizens of the Kingdom of God, but the outcast of the kingdoms belonging to the Prince of the Air. *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience* (Eph 2:2)

6 A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth. What does this mean? If we set out to scorn and to ridicule all the good works of others, we may desire wisdom to achieve our non-commendable goals more effectively, but wisdom never lends itself to such abuse. By his very nature, the scorner and his approach is totally against the nature of wisdom. Scorn and wisdom cannot exist together in the same heart. How is knowledge easy to the understanding heart? Because the understanding heart accepts the Wisdom of God as His rule and compass. therefore, knowledge is prone to open its springs of abundance to such a one. There are men and women with little formal education who know God far better than the Princeton graduate with a doctorate degree in theology. Because they know God, they are better able to know the mind of God they find in His Word. The doctor, however, who may not know God, attempts to understand God with his head and not his heart - an impossibility. It may have been Chesterton (I am not sure) who said: "*We make a big mistake when we try to learn through our minds into our hearts. The reverse is true: we should be learning, rather, through our hearts and into our minds.*"

7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge. It doesn't take the wise man long to recognize that he is speaking with a fool. Why linger with your bucket before a dry fountain. Get away from the wilderness well as quickly as possible for you will die of thirst if you remain too long before it. Seek out the springs and fountains of wisdom that that may only be found among the righteous.

8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit. The fool is even fooled by his own foolishness. If he repeats a lie with great enough regularity, he comes to believe it. He ignores the sign and believes the bridge to be intact. As a result, he speeds to his own demise. God has said that "*the soul that sins, it shall die.*" The fool dismisses this truth with disgust. He believes he can swindle the judgment and condemnation of God. *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God!* (Psalms 14:1) But guess what - there IS! *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* (Gal 6:7) **9 Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.** Wisdom always favors her own. Though the world thinks otherwise, it is always the righteous and wise who win the victory. There may be skirmishes along the battle line that seem lost, but the surrender of the wicked looms just beyond the final battle.