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## HONOR IS NOT FITTING FOR A FOOL

The Proverbs is a collection of wisdom that has the potential to bless us with honor. "Prize her, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a garland of grace; she will present you with a crown of beauty," Proverbs 4:8-9. Consequently, when we choose to ignore the need for wise instruction and counsel believing we are capable and understanding enough without it, we will bring dishonor upon ourselves and show ourselves as fools. The proverbs paint a vivid picture of the one who refuses to accept direction or teaching of any kind, feeling confident in their own selves to the point of rejecting the need to be directed by further wisdom. "Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of his gifts falsely," Proverbs 25:14. "Like snow in summer and like rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool," Proverbs 26:1. To honor a fool is to reorder the natural balance in

the universe. As unfitting and disruptive as it would be to have snow in summer, is how unfitting it would be to pat a fool on the back because of any of their accomplishments and place them in positions of leadership or influence. Like the presence of snow in summer, any attempt on their part to cause significant progress would dissipate as soon as their words leave their lips. As the sun of summer would immediately melt and thwart any attempt of the presence of any snow flakes to cause any significant impact, so will be the response of those who listen to a fool attempt to have influence on others. To honor them or embrace their leadership would be as unfitting and disruptive as rain in harvest. "A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the back of fools," Proverbs 26:3. The only thing fitting for a fool is for the calamity of their foolish ways and decisions to fall back on them in painful consequences

in as similar fashion as a whip is needed for a horse who is wrecklessly choosing to gallop down the wrong paths. We do a disservice by seeking to overprotect the foolish and praising and promoting fools when what they need is to be shown they've chosen a path of inevitable dishonor for themselves when they've been insistant on blazing trails in life with little to no substance of true understanding or genuine insight into what they are doing. The proper thing is to put fools in their place immediately rather than seeking to spare ourselves or them from the discomfort of calling them out for what they are, imposters in the place of true wise understanding. "Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will also be like him. Answer a fool as his folly deserves, that he be not wise in his own eyes," Proverbs 26:4-5. The worst thing that can be done for a fool is to seek to protect them from seeing how foolish they truly are. The problem is they have elevated themselves to a status of influence and direction in their own mind when they possess neither the knowledge nor the true understanding of how to effectively even go about it. But that doesn't matter to the fool, because in their own eyes, everything they say is golden, despite the fact that everyting they say has never been truly tested to be verified are

validated to be helpful at all. To answer a fool according to his folly is to keep back from offering true counter points and corrective statements which rightfully expose the fool as being out of their league and beyond their depth of skill level in the things they confidently assert they know what they are speaking of. The danger is, you will become just like the true fool in that you will then be the participant in the fools directives and suffer along side the fool in the inevitable consequences of disaster that are sure to follow. Instead, answer the fool as his folly deserves. In other words, if the fool is foolish enough to speak on matters they are unequipped to possibly know anything about and yet pass themselves off as the leading expert on the matter, shut them down immediately, as they deserve to be answered. To be complicit and actually go along with the fools plans and ideas is to do severe damage to your own selves. "He cuts off his own feet and drinks violence who sends a message by the hand of a fool," Proverbs 26:6. When we join and align ourselves with the plans and ideas initiated by a fool, we are only lumping ourselves in with the perception that we are just as foolish in the eyes of those around us. This is why it is imperitive that fools be exposed right off the bat as such, otherwise, everyone else who caters to and passifies the fool's

mentality will then ascribe for themselves the same reputation as also being extremely foolish. "Like the legs which are useless to the lame, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools," Proverbs 26:7. Truthfully, it can be downright painful watching and listening to a fool pontificate on matters that are beyond their reach of expertise or understanding. It is painful to listen to them drone on and on with no true direction or trustworthy guidance and serves to be a futile exercise in being exhausted by the experience. But do not make the mistake that giving the fool the floor to speak is as harmless as merely wasting your time listening to them. It is not only useless, but dangerous as well. "Like one who binds a stone in a sling, so is he who gives honor to a fool," Proverbs 26:8. By allowing a fool to have the opportunity to waste everyone's time with useless pointless proverbs pouring out of their mouths, you are also allowing for the opportunity for them to say something painfully dangerous that can cause irreparable damage to their audience as well. We are literally handing the fool stones to hurl wildly at all he comes in contact with by honoring him or giving him any kind of voice at all. "Like a thorn which falls into the hand of a drunkard, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools," Proverbs 26:9. The fool wildly does damage to themselves and others around

them as they lack the ability to properly manage or assess the ideas pouring endlessly out of them. They have no intention of implementing their advice personally towards themselves at all and place the responsibility of putting their thoughts and plans into action upon those who have put the fool in a place of honor, thus foolishly suffering the wounds and pains of trying to bear up under and put into place the pieces of ideas that have no real connection or valid merit. "Like an archer who wounds everyone, so is he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by," Proverbs 26:10. When we are irresponsible and lazy enough to hand delicate issues that require the skill and knowledge of true experience into the hands of fools, it's like hiring a candidate based upon who was standing nearby at the time. When we hand responsible leadership off to those who have no more qualifications other than "I slept in a Holiday Inn last night" we are asking for painful trouble. – Daniel Ruegg



# MONTHLY CHALLENGE

**DIRECTIONS:** Each first Sunday of the month, we will have challenges that you should attempt to complete by the end of the month. If we all, as members, complete these challenges, our church will grow in spirit and in number.

## 1) Praying For Others Challenge

**James 5:16** *"The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."* Prayer can turn night into day, and can change the worst of circumstances into amazing blessings. There are so many areas where our prayers can make a difference. We can pray for one another. "Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God," Col. 4:12. We can pray for our enemies. "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," Matt. 5:44. We can pray for those we wish to share the gospel with. "Praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word," Col. 4:3. There are so many areas where prayer is the difference maker. Devote this month to praying diligently in these specific areas and watch God clear pathways to make progress. "I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert," Is. 43:19.

## 2) USING YOUR BIBLE IN THE WORLD

Share the following verses with someone who does not attend this congregation at least twice this month:

### *Titus 3:3-8*

"For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men."