

# **Get Smart: A Study in Proverbs**

## **Growth Group Leader's Supplement**

### **Study 7: Fool Proof**

#### Growth Point Insights

Questions are always guidelines. Never feel obligated to cover every one. Always put a stress on participation. If someone has a different question, by all means pursue it.

#### **Devotional Seed:**

The devotional seed is intended to stimulate conversation as an introduction to the discussion.

What is the definition of a fool?

This question is supposed to get the ball rolling. There are a lot of brands of foolishness. It may be beneficial to note that this is not referring to mental deficiency, but rather moral deficiency. Generally fools are self absorbed and not God focused.

#### **Deeper Roots**

These questions are intended to promote study and deepen understanding.

1. What is the most foolish thing a person can do? What is the most foolish foolishness?

There are many ways we can be foolish, but some foolishness perpetuates foolishness. Perhaps explore how refusal to take instruction (being wise in your own eyes) is a way in which we can get trapped in foolishness.

Someone may bring up Psalm 14:1 where it says that a fool says in his heart there is no God. This theme comes out in Proverbs in a more positive way where in Proverbs 1:7 it says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The most foolish foolishness is the life that ignores God and his instruction.

2. Why is it dangerous to not be good at listening to criticism?

Keying off the last question this sort of foolishness will trap a person and prevent them from hearing wisdom. Perhaps review a few of the proverbs which talk about the importance of taking input and instruction.

3. Is it possible for a person to recognize their own foolishness or does it require someone else to help them?

The character of foolishness is that fools do not look for correction. Perhaps explore the necessity of a work of the Spirit to open the eyes of a fool. Perhaps also explore the role that we can play in helping others see the need in their lives.

4. Review some of the things that Proverbs defines as foolish. Are there any common themes?

Perhaps a couple themes to notice is the connection between foolishness and anger and foolishness and the tongue.

5. How do you explain Proverbs 26:4-5. Is this a contradiction?

These two proverbs show us that all proverbs need a measure of wisdom to apply. Just having the proverb is not enough. We need to know when to apply it.

These proverbs are saying that there are different kinds of fools. One's who need to be corrected and one's who need to be left alone.

Perhaps follow up with questions as to how you can recognize the difference.

This offers a lead into the next question

6. How do you know when it is appropriate to confront someone regarding their foolishness?

Maybe a younger person needs more correction, while a person more set in their ways will not learn new tricks.

Each case will take a measure of discernment, because not all situations are the same.

Maybe the principle of bit once twice shy. If you try to help and get bitten, leave them alone the second time.

## **Bearing Fruit**

These questions are designed to be a little more personal and application oriented. Use these questions to focus more on sharing. It helps if as a leader, you are willing to share your life with the group.

## **Branching Out**

Each month your group will be asked to focus some time on outreach and service. Plan to spend some time planning and thinking about how your group can reach out together. We will use this space to help your group integrate with the larger outreach efforts of the church.

On Dec 10-12 we will have a Christmas outreach dinner called Together for Christmas. It will be a nice meal, conversation around the table along with a fun program filled with humor and interaction. It will be a great opportunity to invite guests. We need to help our groups get excited about inviting people. Create a list of possible invitees and pray for opportunity to invite and positive response.

It is important now to talk about finding opportunities to make invitations. Let's work together as groups to make this a success.