

Proverbs Series #8: Focusing Our Efforts

Proverbs 9:7-18 ⁷He who corrects a mocker brings shame on himself; he who rebukes a wicked man taints himself. ⁸Do not rebuke a mocker, or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man, and he will love you. ⁹Instruct a wise man, and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man, and he will increase his learning. ¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. ¹¹For through wisdom your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life. ¹²If you are wise, you are wise to your own advantage; but if you scoff, you alone will bear the consequences. ¹³The woman named Folly is loud; she is naive and knows nothing. ¹⁴She sits at the door of her house, on a seat in the heights of the city, ¹⁵calling out to those who pass by, who make their paths straight. ¹⁶“Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” she says to him who lacks judgment. ¹⁷“Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is tasty!” ¹⁸But they do not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol. (BSB)

Intro: Let's define a few terms.

- **Mocker**: Someone who is prideful, arrogant, insolent, dismissive of wisdom, instruction and discipline. They will not submit to accountability. They poke fun at real believers. They have no interest in God's moral standards. They have good and evil reversed.
 - **Wise Man**: A person who fears God and puts Him in the rightful place in their life.
 - **Folly**: A personification of the lifestyle of a mocker, a fool, and a lazy minded person.
- I. Here are the details of this passage.
- A. We are **warned** not to stoop to the level of an evil person in an effort to reach them. V. 7-8
 - B. We are instructed to patiently **discern** whether the person has a heart to hear what God says before engaging them in moral discussions. V. 9.
 - C. We are to have a healthy **fear** of YHWH. V. 10-12
 - D. We must guard whom we **listen** to. V. 13-17
- II. How can we apply these truths?
- A. We cannot engage the evil in this world by using methods that are not of **God**. We must all learn what it means to “not go beyond what is written.”
 - B. We must not throw our **pearls** to pigs. This means that we must focus our efforts on outreach to those who God is drawing to himself. This takes supernatural discernment.
 - C. We must **replace** unbiblical beliefs with biblical ones.
 - D. It is important for us to guard **where** we seek truth.