



Choose Wisdom as you Face Life's Folly

Ecclesiastes 10:1-20

The Harm of Folly 1-3

- Eccl 10:1-3 Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's ointment, and cause it to give off a foul odor; *so does* a little folly to one respected for wisdom *and* honor. ² A wise man's heart *is* at his right hand, but a fool's heart at his left. ³ Even when a fool walks along the way, He lacks wisdom, and he shows everyone *that* he is a fool.
 - Just a little folly can destroy the good of much wisdom
 - The wise and foolish go opposite directions from within
 - A fool is easily spotted by his foolish actions

Wisdom under Pressure 4

- 10:4 If the spirit of the ruler rises against you, Do not leave your post; For conciliation pacifies great offenses.
 - Use Wise behavior with temperamental leaders
 - Rash defensive responses increase anger
 - Staying calm and rational will reduce friction

Dealing with Political Folly 5-7

- 10:5-7 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, as an error proceeding from the ruler: ⁶ Folly is set in great dignity, While the rich sit in a lowly place. ⁷ I have seen servants on horses, While princes walk on the ground like servants.
 - Error of placing inept people in exalted positions
 - Need for competency regardless of social status

Risks of Daily Life 8-10

- 10:8-10 He who digs a pit will fall into it, And whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent. ⁹ He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, *And* he who splits wood may be endangered by it. ¹⁰ If the ax is dull, And one does not sharpen the edge, Then he must use more strength; But wisdom brings success.
 - Workplace accidents can be avoided by wise precaution
 - Life's dangers/risks can't be avoided, but can be reduced
 - Wisdom provides successful advantages

Wisdom in Risks/Rewards 11

- 11 A serpent may bite when *it is* not charmed; The babbler is no different.
 - Snake charmer is a mysterious skill (poisonous snakes)
 - The ability must be applied successfully to receive fees
 - Missed opportunities can be disastrous

Wise Use of Tongue 12-15

- 12-15 The words of a wise man's mouth *are* gracious, But the lips of a fool shall swallow him up; ¹³ The words of his mouth begin with foolishness, And the end of his talk *is* raving madness. ¹⁴ A fool also multiplies words. No man knows what is to be; Who can tell him what will be after him? ¹⁵ The labor of fools wearies them, For they do not even know how to go to the city!
 - Wise words bring favor to both speaker and those addressed
 - Wisdom is essential to minimize impact foolish words cause
 - Everyone recognizes the fool except the fool himself

Incompetent Politicians cause havoc **16-19**

—16-19 Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, And your princes feast in the morning! ¹⁷ Blessed *are* you, O land, when your king is the son of nobles, And your princes feast at the proper time— For strength and not for drunkenness! ¹⁸ Because of laziness the building decays, And through idleness of hands the house leaks. ¹⁹ A feast is made for laughter, And wine makes merry; But money answers everything.

- Youth lack maturity and character to hold high office
- Wise people care about how leaders govern their country

Wisdom must use Caution 20

- 20 Do not curse the king, even in your thought; Do not curse the rich, even in your bedroom; For a bird of the air may carry your voice, And a bird in flight may tell the matter.
 - Things said in private often get back to the person
 - Don't revile your leaders, pray for them (1 Tim 2:1-2)



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