



## There's Nobody Worse Than These People

There are few things more tragic than a person becoming a fool or a scoffer. A few of the terms that describe this type of person are juvenile delinquent, incorrigible, career criminal, rebellious, or self-centered. While anyone could display some aspects of a fool or scoffer briefly, fools and scoffers demonstrate their destructive behavior as a way of life. They continue in willful sin, disregard God's plan for their lives, and dismiss anyone who warns them of sin's consequences.

The speech and actions of fools and scoffers indicate the self-centered condition of their hearts, their real selves (Mark 7:20-23). Since fools and scoffers have spiritual "heart disease," all aspects of their lives and relationships are detrimentally affected. However, due to their self-centeredness, fools and scoffers do not accurately discern the negative impact they have on others.

Not surprisingly, a confirmed fool or scoffer will not respond in a Christ-honoring manner to loving, biblically based communication, no matter how diligently a believer in Christ utilizes it. This rejection is critical for believers to realize when they try to help someone with characteristics of a fool or scoffer. No believer is gifted or caring enough to change the heart of a fool or scoffer. The only hope for a fool or scoffer is a "heart change," which is accomplished only by God.

The book of Proverbs lists the following traits of a fool (*sample of a larger list*):

- A fool despises instruction, hates knowledge, and sets his own self-centered standards as the "rule" for living. (Proverbs 12:15)
- A fool slanders others, lies, and often conceals hatred. (Proverbs 10:18)
- A fool openly demonstrates and finds satisfaction in persistent sinfulness. (Proverbs 10:23, Proverbs 13:16)

The book of Proverbs describes the characteristics of a scoffer:

- A scoffer will not respond to correction. (Proverbs 13:1)
- A scoffer cannot find wisdom. (Proverbs 14:6)
- A scoffer enjoys his/her way of life. (Proverbs 1:22)

Trouble is inevitable for a fool or scoffer (Proverbs 3:35; 9:12; 10:14; 10:21). If you try to correct a fool or scoffer, expect rejection and retaliation (Proverbs 9:6-8; 13:20).

Scriptural perspectives of fools and scoffers provide ample warnings of this destructive pattern of life. Apart from divine intervention, fools and scoffers will persist in a continual downward spiral of devastation for themselves, often causing untold pain and heartache for others as well. The downward spiral of fools and scoffers can only be halted by a heart change. This is accomplished by God's power, not by anyone's good intentions or sincere efforts.

For a more complete study of Fools & Scoffers, see [The Most Difficult People in the World](#).

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

**Mark 7:20-23**, And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

**Proverbs 12:15**, The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.

**Proverbs 10:18**, The one who conceals hatred has lying lips, and whoever utters slander is a fool.

**Proverbs 10:23**, Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool ...

**Proverbs 13:16**, ... a fool flaunts his folly.

**Proverbs 13:1**, A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

**Proverbs 14:6**, A scoffer seeks wisdom in vain ...

**Proverbs 1:22**, How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing?

**Proverbs 3:35**, The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace.

**Proverbs 9:12**, If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

**Proverbs 10:14**, The wise lay up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool brings ruin near.

**Proverbs 10:21**, The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of sense.

**Proverbs 9:6-8**, Leave your simple ways and live, and walk in the way of insight. Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a scoffer or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

**Proverbs 13:20**, Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.