

Series: Psalms
Title: The Fool and the Wise
Text: Psalm 14: 1-7
Date: March 17, 2013
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

The subject of Psalm 14 is of utmost importance. The message here is recorded, almost in the same words, 3 other times in scripture: here, then in Psalm 53 (which is almost a repeat of this Psalm), and then Paul quotes a great deal of it in Romans 3, applying it to all men, both to Jew and Gentile. The same truth is repeated throughout the scripture in different words.

Therefore, the best thing for each of us here right now is to give our full attention and to heed what we will hear the LORD speak in this Psalm. David wrote it, but God gave him the words.

Our title will be our divisions: The Fool and the Wise

Psalm 14: 1: «To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.» **The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. 2: The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. 3: They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

I. THE FOOL—Psalm 14: 1: The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God.*

The name God gives to each one who rejects his Son is, “**The fool...**” The word means simply “stupid.” The root word signifies “a withered piece of grass or a carcass”, which means he is a man who has no root, no sap, no life.

John Trapp, “That sapless fellow, that carcass of a man, that walking sepulcher of himself, in whom all religion and right reason is withered and wasted, dried up and decayed.”

A natural man does not have Christ the Root within; he is unconnected to Christ the Vine. Therefore, he has no sap, no life, no wisdom of God. It why God says,

Isaiah 40: 6:...all flesh is grass and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: 7: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

Application: Is this what we will write on your gravestone, “Here lies the fool?” If a man dies, having rejected Christ, free justification through faith in his blood and eternal life in Christ, there is nothing else that could more accurately describe him than to write, “Here lays the fool.”

The source of the fool’s rebellion is his own heart as we see in verse 1, “**The fool hath said in his heart.**” The heart of every person by our first birth is enmity against God.

Genesis 8: 21:...the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth;

Ecclesiastes 9:3...the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead....

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Here is the answer of the fool to the word of God, **“No, God.”** The words “there is” have been supplied by the translators. Remove them to get the true meaning. The fool does not say, “There is no God”. It is not that he denies the existence of God. If that were the meaning then the name used would be capital LORD—Jehovah—meaning “the existing one.” Instead, the name used is Elohim—which is God’s name as the sovereign, ruling, governing, saving God. It is not the existence of Jehovah but God’s Authority as ruler, as lawgiver, as sovereign Savior, which the fool says no to. The fools reply to every command of God is, “No, God, I will not have you reign over me.”

Illustration: Let’s say there is a man who has one supply of daily food and that from a certain king. This man commits a crime against that very king who supplies him his daily bread. But the king sends his ambassador to this man with the good news that the king has chosen a certain number of men in the land to whom he will show mercy. The king has found a way he can so so and remain just. The King will send his own Son to take his place so that those the king shows mercy to can go free and yet the king remains just. But the man must obey the king’s command: he must publicly confess his sin, he must honor the King’s Son by trusting him to save him, else the man will surely be condemned to death. But knowing the king is his provider of daily bread, knowing the king shall show mercy to some men in the land, knowing the yoke of the King is light and easy which he has commanded, upon hearing the kings terms the man says to the king, “No, King! I will not have you to reign over me!” What else could you call that man but a fool!

Application: Sinner, that is exactly what you are doing. You have committed high treason against the very God in whom you live and move and have your being. The very God you must face in judgment has sent you the good news that God has a chosen number of sinners that he shall show mercy unto. God has found a way—by sending his own Son to die in the place of his elect—so God can be both a just God and a Savior. You might be one of those chosen men. Yet, knowing all this still you say “No, God! I will not have you to reign over me! I believe I can work out my own salvation!”

So here is what God says about all the works fools imagine to be so pleasing to God, verse 1, **“They...”** Notice, “the fool” is singular but “they” is plural. The first fool was our father Adam. Adam said in his heart, “No, God, I will eat the fruit you forbid.” According to God’s definition, that made Adam “the fool.” Therefore, since “the fool hath said in his heart, “No God” all his children are corrupt by nature. Verse 1 says, **“They are corrupt, they have done abominable works.”** The word means not only is the sin-nature corruption itself, but by trying to clean self, the sinner actively makes self more corrupt. Every work is abhorred, hated, by God.

Application: Sinner, unbelief is not neutral; its active. Every moment you refuse to believe God, you are saying in your heart, “No, God!” God has sent the truth to you right here, right now. Every second you refuse to believe the record he has given of his Son, though you may be doing wonderful works to try to save yourself, you are actively calling God a liar.

1 John 5:10: He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

Illustration: Imagine you are guilty in an earthly court. Your lawyer tells you, “The judge says you are guilty, the more you try to plead innocence the more corrupt you become. But here’s what the judge says, “If you plead guilty he will drop all charges; but if you try to save your life he will sentence you to death.” Yet, in hardness of heart you stubbornly say, “No, I’ll save my life.” Christ clearly said, “whosoever will save his life shall lose it” (Mt 16: 25)—you are corrupt, trying to save your life only corrupts you more—but still you will go on trying it anyway?—that is God’s definition of the fool. The Lord says in verse 1, **“there is none that doeth good.”**

Illustration: When I was in Australia, I met a very nice lady who owned a jewelry store in Sydney. She asked me to tell her the gospel. During our conversation, I quoted this verse. She named medical discoveries, benevolent deeds, other things men have done in history and said, “See, men do good. How can you say, ‘There is none that doeth good?’” I said, “It is God that says ‘There is none that doeth good.’” She very kindly replied, “No. I just don’t believe that.” She didn’t realize it but she said, “No, God. I believe there are some that do good, that I do good.” That’s calling God a liar.

With mankind there are varying degrees of sinners. So we call those not as wicked, good. But the only reason some do not sin as much outwardly is God’s restraining hand. Still, the outward wickedness of the worst man is the heart of the best man. God is perfection; we must be as perfect as God. He is the standard of purity, the judge of what constitutes a good work—filth beside filthy is filth.

Now, the exalter of man’s free will explains the doctrine of election this way, “From eternity God looked down through time and saw those who would believe on his Son therefore God chose them.” Our text says the LORD did, indeed, look down upon all men, verse 2, “**The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.**”

Spurgeon drew this picture, “Behold the eyes of Omniscience ransacking the globe, and prying among every people and nation.”

The boaster says that God saw that some would believe. But let’s hear God tell us is what God saw, verse 3, “**They are all gone aside, [Ps 53 says: everyone of them is gone back]**” Not only did God not find any person seeking him, he found us all going away from him. He says in verse 3, “**they are all together become filthy.**” It means all together are a putrid stench like a rotting corpse.

Illustration: The astronauts who came back after spending a year in the space lab said the first thing they were amazed at was how bad earth stank. We don’t smell us because we live every day with our offensive odor. God says that we smell putrid. Out of the billions throughout all time, God says, “all, altogether, none, no, not one” did he find doing good. That is the doctrine of depravity.

God defines depravity in Ephesians 4: 18 as “being *alienated from* the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart”

II. THE WISE

Opposite the fool is Christ Jesus the Wise. God in human flesh is the wise One. The name God gives the first Adam and all who are in him is “the fool”, the name God gives the last Adam and all who are in him is Wisdom.

Proverbs 8: 12: I, Wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. 14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength. 15 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. 16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth. 17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. 18 Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable riches and righteousness. 19 My fruit *is* better than gold, *yea*, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. 20 I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: 21 That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

The source of the fool’s rebellion is his own heart as we saw in verse 1, “**The fool hath said in his heart, No God.**”—but Christ said, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: *yea*, thy law *is* within my heart. (Ps 40: 8)

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 6: 37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

Hebrews 10: 6: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7: Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

Of fools we saw in verse 1, **“They are corrupt, they have done abominable works there is none that doeth good.”** But Christ’s heart was pure, not corrupt.

Luke 1:35: And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

And because Christ’s heart was pure, his works are perfect. Christ Jesus is THE ONE who doeth good.

Isaiah 42:21: The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make *it* honorable.

He healed sick sinners, he still heals sinners sick in sin; clothes sinners in his perfect righteousness. Even his enemies bore witness to his works,

Mark 6:2..he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

Of fools we read in verse 2, **“The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.”** Fools have no understanding, but of Christ’s understanding we read,

Isaiah 11: 2: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; 3: And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth:

He is the Wisdom of God—how God can be just and the Justifier of all who believe. Of God is he made unto his people—Wisdom—the fool has no understanding, but those born anew of his Spirit, have the mind of Christ. He’s give his people knowledge.

2 Peter 1:3: According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Fool’s do not seek the LORD, but not only did Christ always seek the Father, in great grace, “the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Lk 19: 10)

John 6: 39 And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

He not only seeks his lost sheep, he finds them and keeps them:

John 10: 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Of fools we read in verse 2, **“The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men,...3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”** But God looked down upon this One, and

Matthew 17:5...behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

Yet, we said, “No, God.” He gave himself into our hands and we took him and hung him on a tree. There, on the cross, for vile, base, corrupt sinners which the Father gave to him from eternity—for fools who said, “No God!”—he bore what we are—until he bore it away and cried, “It is finished!”

He suffered to make his people the opposite of all these awful things we see here. Instead of corruption, he makes his people perfection. Instead of rebel lawbreakers, he makes his people perfectly righteous. He does it because he satisfied justice for his people and put away our sin completely.

God the Father declared once more that the Wise One is well-pleasing. His offering is well-pleasing. He has made complete satisfaction for the sin of his people. God declared it by raising him from the dead. Leaving our body of sin dead and buried in the grave never again to be remembered!

Application: Now sinner—this is the King’s Son, Christ Jesus our God and Savior—the only Wise One! He says to to you today—“I have reserved mercy for thousands! I have put away all their iniquity, their righteousness is of me.”

Now, God says you are guilty! But are you one for whom he died? Will you prove that his Holy Spirit, has washed you in regeneration, that he has made you new, that he has done all: from choosing you, to redeeming you, to calling you to him by his effectual grace. Will you prove it by smiting upon your breast, saying, ‘Yes Lord, I am the fool. I am corrupt. Woe is me I am undone. I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Oh, have mercy on me the sinner!’ I tell you, on the Authority of my Lord and my Master, like the publican, you will go down to your house today, justified from all your sins.

Or will you this day look Mercy and Righteousness in the face and say to him, again, “No, God! I’d rather perish in my sins!” If so, you prove you are only the fool. We will write on your gravestone, ‘Here lays the fool?’ or will we write, “Here lays one who our All-Wise God made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus?” (2 Tim 3: 15)

Harden not your heart. Get alone with God and get this matter settled today

Psalm 107:43 Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

Hosea 14:9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

Isaiah 35: 8 And an Highway shall be there, and a Way, and [he] shall be called The Way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not...9...but the redeemed shall walk there: 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Amen!