

# 15. the Bondage of Foolishness

by Denny Kenaston

---

*The bondage of foolishness in children can be driven far from them through consistent discipline and a patient, kind, and compassionate heart.*

**Duration:** 43:36

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:11-12, Proverbs 13:24, Proverbs 20:30, Proverbs 22:15, Proverbs 23:13-14, Proverbs 29:15, Proverbs 29:17, Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21, Hebrews 12:11

**Topics:** "Parental Discipline", "Child Rearing"

---

## Description

This sermon delves into the concept of the 'bondage of foolishness' as described in Proverbs 22:15, emphasizing the importance of understanding and addressing the root causes of children's wrong behavior. It highlights the need for parents to discern and address silliness and foolishness in their children, guiding them towards righteousness and obedience through loving discipline. The sermon explores the impact of foolishness on children's conscience and the role of discipline in bringing clarity and revival to their hearts, ultimately leading to peace and joy.

---

## Transcript

The next session here, the title of this session is the bondage of foolishness. The bondage of foolishness. Proverbs 22 verse 15 says, foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

This verse is one of the key verses on child training in the Bible. One of the most important. It is filled with deep insights.

It gets right down to the heart of the matter and reveals some of the deepest needs that a child has. It's very important that we understand the needs that our children have. I pray, this is my prayer this evening, that God will open our eyes to see the root cause of much of our child's wrong behavior.

It is a matter of roots and fruits. If you get the root, don't forget, you will also get the fruit. So it's always wiser to go after the root.

Amen? We're going after the root in this session. We're going to look at several words that will help us define what this word foolishness is. But first of all, consider a more modern English word which most of us know very well.

And it is a synonym of foolishness and that is silliness. Silliness is bound in the heart of a child. All parents can relate to this word and readily admit that they see it in their children.

Is that an amen? Yeah? Okay. Good. Some time ago, and I can't remember where I find these things.

Well, you know, when you find something, you don't think, you know, I might have to tell somebody else where I found this, but I don't know where I found it. But somewhere in my studies on this verse, I found this picture of what foolishness is. The word picture is an uncontrolled spiral.

You know, these little jack-in-the-boxes, you know, you put Jack down in there, there's a spring on him, and you put him down in there, and you turn the box a little bit, and all of a sudden, Jack just flies out of the box. That's the picture of foolishness. That's the word picture.

Just an uncontrolled spring flying through the air. You never know which way it's going to go. So, silliness, or a spirit that is out of control, is bound in the heart of a child.

It is very important that we learn to identify this silliness, and thus identifying it, we can avoid it some. Now, let me give you these definitions. This is a bit studious, but we have to give them.

Foolishness. The Hebrew word, foolishness, which you find in Proverbs and in this verse, is defined this way. Stupid, silly, no sense.

The picture, the word picture for foolishness, get this, is a fat, jolly man. Foolishness, in the Greek, the Greek word for foolishness is defined as silly talk, a joker, and a buffoon. I'll tell you what that is later.

That's an old English word. The Greek word is moral, which is where we get moron. That's the Greek word for foolishness.

Moral, where we get moron. Another word, folly. You'll find this word in Proverbs in many places.

The Hebrew word for folly is the same as the word for foolishness. In the Hebrew, same word. Folly, foolishness, same one.

Now, let's go to the dictionary. Now, when I go to the dictionary, I go to 1828 Webster's Dictionary. These new ones, they're changing the words quite a bit.

The word folly in the Webster's Dictionary is not a high criminal act. It is not a high criminal act, but actions of nonsense, silly, vain, and trifling. Webster's 1828 on the word silly.

Want of common wisdom, simple, witless, silly, stupid, foolish, foolish, harmless, folly. Fool in Webster's Dictionary. To trifle, to toy, to spend time in idleness, sport, or mirth.

Webster's Dictionary, stupid. I'm putting some of these words because those were the words that I found in the Hebrew definition. Stupid in Webster's Dictionary.

Dull and senseless, no sense, nonsense, no control over one's senses. That's the definition. A joker, a buffoon, a jester, one who speaks to excite laughter.

Words that are not real and have no purpose. And last of all, a buffoon. To be funny, to trifle, to make jokes, and to play the fool.

Now this is quite a list of words to ponder, and I would encourage you to ponder them deeply because there is a secret in those words, a key that will open up many insights to you about where your children are at and how you can help them. And if you truly love them, you will find out how you can help them, instead of just always getting the stick. There is a goldmine of discernment in these definitions.

The words foolishness and folly, it does not describe evil and wickedness. This is an important distinction. There are other words in the Book of Proverbs that do describe evil, but there is a distinction between the two of them.

They are also translated fool and foolishness, but they are different words. Now Proverbs was written so that parents can learn, and number two, so that children can be instructed in paths of righteousness. That's the motivation behind the writing of the Book of Proverbs.

And remember, our goal is a righteous, ordered life for our children. Amen? So the warning is given to us to get this foolishness out of our child while they are young. In a child, in a child, it is simply silliness, nonsense, and lack of control.

But if the child is left to himself, the child grows up, and the silliness grows up, and the silliness grows up also. When folly grows to maturity in adults, the Hebrew word changes, and it becomes words like evil, wickedness, and perverse. So here you have a child who has foolishness bound in their heart, and you have a parent who lets the child to himself.

When that silly, just simple nonsense, nothing absolutely wicked about it, when that silliness grows to maturity, it becomes rank, evil, and perversion. And thus, the plea from God to us is to deal with it, and get rid of it, and keep it out while they are young. That's the plea.

This revelation changes our perspective on our child's silly antics quite a bit. Lots of parents, you know, think it's pretty cute, you know, little Johnny and all his silly little antics. Once you begin to see this nonsense for what it is, you also begin to see what eggs it on.

Or should I say, what draws it out of the child. And that's the reason. Sometimes us parents are guilty.

We are the guilty ones who stimulate the children on the foolishness and nonsense. Sometimes it is one of their siblings, or a foolish minded playmate who would be guilty. Sometimes it is an activity.

It could be certain books, or even certain games. As you begin to discern what foolishness or silliness is, then you will begin to also see what makes it happen. If you're smart, you will begin to eliminate the things that make it happen.

That only makes sense. I mean, who wants to keep spanking a child, right? Now you may react a bit here. I realize I'm treading here a bit tonight.

You may react and say, well, wait a minute. Can't the child be happy? And the answer is a resounding yes. The child can be happy.

However, there is a big difference between a child that is filled with nonsense and a child that is joyful, happy, and in control. And it is vital that God begins to show us the difference between the two of those. Many times we are calling silly nonsense, happy child.

But yet, we still have to scratch our heads at all the junk that it produces, that we have to try to deal with in the child. May God open our eyes to see what is happening inside this child's heart. When we begin to see this difference, we can begin to work with our children on a deeper level.

We are now not just dealing with fruit, but we are dealing with the root that made the fruit. And you will always get better results when you deal with a root than you will if you deal with a fruit. And by the way, if you deal with the root more consistently, you will save them a lot of poor character.

Amen? All right. Silly, laughing America. We live in silly, laughing America.

Let me just read this to you. We have been influenced by our society more than we realize. Let's face the raw facts, brothers and sisters.

America is laughing her way down the broad road that leads to destruction. Telling jokes while they go. Everything has to be funny and fun.

The people who make the movies, print the toys, know about this foolishness that is in the children. And they are developing and designing a whole new way to reach the next generation. Now if you want to reach the next generation, you'll do something silly.

And then you'll reach them. Only problem is it doesn't work, does it? Look around you. It doesn't work.

It doesn't work. It doesn't work. The puppet show is not really getting the depths of the truth in the hearts of even the Christian little children.

This new program is called Foolishness 101. Even the Christians have succumbed to these new methods. Now Moses, the prophet Moses, the patriarch Moses, that fiery man who stood on the mount, that Moses is now a funny little man with a big nose and a funny beard.

God help us. And somehow nobody realizes it. Somehow they're not getting it.

And they just keep on going. And it gets more silly and more silly all the time. And I'll pay my respects to some of the issues a little later on this week.

Remember our definitions. When folly and nonsense grow up, it becomes wickedness and all manner of evil. This is a commentary of American society.

Folly and foolishness has grown up and it is all manner of evil even in the church. But it doesn't seem like anyone has made the connection. But brothers and sisters, we better make it.

We had better make the connection. It is not progress. I think it's alright to have a good time.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm all for good, clean, family, friendly, relationship building fun. I believe in it.

We do it at our house. It's a good thing to do. But I'm not for all the nonsense that is going on in our land today.

Most of what is called fun today is far from this. It only breeds more nonsense. Alright.

That's enough on that word. You can chew on that one for a few days. I'm sure you will.

Let's look at the next word. The next word we want to look at is the word bound. This is an awesome word.

It puts an urgency into our child training. The Bible says this folly, this silliness is bound in my child's heart. That's serious business.

If all this folly is going to produce those things, then I better figure out how to get it out. The word bound is very interesting. It is the same word used to describe what they did to Samson.

Remember? Samson? I mean he was the catch of the century. When those Philistines caught Samson, they had the prize of the century. That guy had escaped them so many times, when they bound him up, they bound him good.

That's the word that is used. That's the word bound. This silliness, this uncontrollable, uncontrollable spirit is bound there.

Some of you may be saying, yes brother, I know it. I know it. It's there.

I know what you're talking about. Most parents do know what I'm talking about. Most parents have not pondered it long enough to get down to the real issues and get down to the place where they can help their children and deliver them children from all of it.

I want you to also notice in this text where it is bound. The text says, in the heart. The heart? Oh, we learned about the heart the other evening, didn't we? The heart.

The heart is the most powerful part of the human's being. The heart. The heart is the place where they choose.

The heart is the place where they're motivated. The heart is the place where they desire. And the Bible says that foolishness is bound in the heart of your child.

This is getting more serious every minute, isn't it? Amen. I want it to get more serious every minute. Maybe you have tried different methods to get rid of it, but to no avail.

Some parents simply live with it. They call it the terrible twos and wait for the day that the children grow out of it. Right? Terrible twos? Well, I don't believe in the terrible twos.

I want to assure you there is a way you can loose those children and let them go free. Terrible twos is not biblical. That's psychology.

That's Dr. Spock. That's what Dr. Spock produced. It's not biblical.

The terrible twos can become the sweetest stage in a child's life, I promise you. We often say at our house, every house ought to have a sweet little two-year-old all the time. Only thing is, you can't just keep having a two-year-old around, but bless God, the children get married and have grandchildren and then you have little two-year-olds around again.

We say at our house, with a two-year-old around, who needs a television set? Right? Listen, when that little two-year-old is at peace with it's family and with it's parents and it's subdued and it's under subjection, they are the sweetest little things to have around you could ever find. And the most entertaining, humorous, natural humor you'll ever get. You'll never need a TV and a TV will never match it.

The joy, the blessing, the sparkling joy that a little two-year-old brings to a household when that child is in its place, according to the Bible, it cannot be compared. So, terrible twos, we're going to throw that one out the window. We don't believe in those.

And some of you may have a terrible two-year-old, but I'm saying that for all the rest of you who don't or all of you that are just starting to have children. Mark that one out of your theology. There is no such thing.

And if you don't believe that there is no such thing and you practice what God says, guess what? You probably won't have terrible twos. Hallelujah. Okay, so what do we do with this foolishness? Now that we've established that it's there and we've established that it is there in a very strong way and we've established that it's very urgent that we learn what to do with it, what do we do with it? Well, you can yell at it, but it won't go away.

You can plead with it, but it won't go away. You can give it rewards and promise it big toys, but it will not go away. You can stand it in the corner, but it will not go away.

You can even slap it and spank it, and it will not go away. How do you get rid of it? If you will give your child a loving spanking like I described to you last night, I guarantee you it will flee. And your child will be at rest and full of an obedient heart, and that is the will of God.

Notice also that the Bible says, far from him. Glory. Far from him.

That means it's not going to come back in two hours. Right? Far from him. It's not going to come back in two hours.

Sounds great, doesn't it? Now, we all know how this thing works by our own experience. We know those times when a child was manifesting the conduct mentioned above. We gave them a good, sound spanking, and found the peaceable fruit in the child when we were done.

We all know that that works. They were peaceful. They were content.

They shared their toys. They were kind, and they were just a good little boy or girl the rest of the day and the next day and the next day. You know why? The child has been set free from the bondage of foolishness and all the junk that comes out of it.

The child has been set free. The child is at peace. The child is at rest, and guess what? So are you, and so is your house.

Just like the Scripture says. And you shall have rest, and he shall bring delight to your soul. Remember the little two-year-old? Delight to your soul.

That precious little fella. That little girl bouncing around there so sweetly, being nice to everybody. Why is the child free? Because you drove that foolishness far away from them.

Listen, parents. Do your child a favor. Drive that foolishness out of their heart.

A word of caution here. Some parents think the harder you spank them, the further it will flee. That is not right.

I have heard parents testify to me with their stick in their hand. They were spanking their child and saying, you foolishness, you get out of here. Go.

You just go. Go now, you know, and letting the child have it. Dear parents, please don't do that.

Don't do that. Change your mind. It is not the stick itself.

It's the whole thing that I described to you yesterday. It is that loving, patient, kind, overflowing parent who graciously, full of mercy and compassion, spans the child that chases foolishness far away. So don't increase the swats to get rid of it, and don't increase how hard you hit to get rid of it.

Change your heart. You will get better results. Some children live in the midst of all this silliness and nonsense described earlier all the time.

It breeds more of the same. Often it breeds worse things also. These things build up day by day, don't they? Have you ever seen them build up day by day? See, if you let that there, it is going to get worse.

It will not get better. It will not go away. The child is not going to get rid of it by having a better day tomorrow.

It will not go away. Your dear child needs a loving spanking. The child's conscience gets defiled.

Selfishness takes the lead, and they are miserable, and you can tell they're miserable. When we see the child like that, immediately we begin to think, this child needs to be set free. This child needs to be set free.

I see it as a terrible injustice and an unloving thing to leave your child go around for days in this condition needing a spanking. That's not love. It's not love.

They are frustrated. They are discontent, and they can't seem to be happy with anything. You know it, and they know it.

That's why sometimes then when you do finally relieve them, it's like, oh, thank you. Phew. Man, am I glad to get rid of that load.

You know, they say those kind of words. Many times when I have to give a spanking, I give the spanking with both the act and the root in mind. I'll find myself speaking to the child, because I've been watching the child, and I've been seeing their conduct.

You know, when the foolishness is there, but they haven't done an act that you can say, this is wrong. You need to be spanked for this. You just look at it, and you say, this child is not right.

This child is not right. So then when you finally find yourself in the room to lovingly care for the child, I often bring them back and let them look at the last couple days of their life, and help them to see. Do you see how foolish, how uncontrolled you were there? Do you see where you were? Do you see this? Do you see? Do you see? Yeah, they see.

That's what made this, that called you up here to receive this spanking. You begin to work deeper with them when you understand this. Other thoughts on foolishness, quickly here.

Once you see what it is, and you learn how to get rid of it, then if you love them at all, you will not want it to come back. Once you learn what it is, and you learn how to deliver your child from it, you will become keenly interested in where this whole thing comes from. There have been times that I have watched it on a Sunday afternoon.

There have been times when we had somebody over for a Sunday afternoon visit, and there was a bunch of foolishness going on, and by the time Sunday evening came around, I saw my child in need, and they needed to get a spanking, and on Monday morning in my prayer time, the Lord would speak to my heart and say, you know, Denny, it's your fault. You left him run like that all day yesterday. What else do you expect? And I had to bow my heart.

I had to bow my heart. What brings foolishness back? I have observed just a few. Foolish children breed foolish more foolishness in other children.

Number two, too much choking around the house will breed foolishness in your children. In fact, the children wait for the opportunity at times. Oh, dad's getting a little light here.

Dad's getting a little free. Oh boy, we can all just let her rip. You ever see that? I have, and I get convicted, and I think, yeah, I got, that was my own fault, because I got lighthearted.

What I did a little of, man, they jumped in whole hog, rolled all over the floor, you know, held their tummies with laughter and everything. Yeah, it's dad, dad, not the boys, dad. Silly activities and unsupervised activities.

All the nonsense books, nonsense movies and videos, nonsense entertainment in this world. There is a multitude of things, and I trust that most of them, you don't allow them. You don't allow them.

Let us reason together, brothers and sisters. If spanking is the only way to get rid of it, and it is, it seems pretty unloving to allow these things that breed more of it in my child. That doesn't make sense, does it? So, the whole thought there is, once you recognize what it is, and you begin to get discernment that you can see what's happening here, you learn how to get rid of it, you learn the things that bring it back, you start making some decisions to protect the child, and guess what? Not as many spankings.

Let me give you an example. A few years ago, I spotted foolishness in little Joshua. I saw it two days early.

I knew what it was. I knew things weren't right. I knew he was out of character, but he didn't do anything wrong.

He was just kind of, you know, conscience guilty, rolling around, doing silly things here and there, but nothing that I could say, oh, my son, you're going to have to have a spanking. So, here's what I did. In my quiet time in the morning, I prayed, Father, you know, remember, we're raising this boy together, right? Father, Joshua needs a spanking.

I know he does. I see the foolishness. It's in there.

I can see it all over the place. Would you please help me today to see something? Because see, when it's there, you all won't see it. You know, they'll be rolling around out in the back where you can't see them.

I just prayed that prayer, and that was it, and I went on to other things. Then I went out to the shop, started working. I was working at the cut-off saw, and after I was out there for about one hour, the Lord just said,

go to the house.

Go to the house. Oh, turn off the saw, and I started heading up to the house. I walked up to the door of the house, and I opened up the door, and there was Joshua throwing himself on the floor, you know, because he didn't get the toy that he wanted, and there he was.

I mean, he fell on the floor. He rolled over and looked up, and there's dad standing right in the door, caught in the very act. Well, that's how it works, see? Now when I took that little fellow upstairs and went through all the things that we talked about last night, we discussed the very act, but we also discussed the heart that he had for the last two or three days, and he bowed his heart and said, you're right, papa.

I know it's that way. I know I've been out of order. I should have come to you and said something, and there we are.

We're working deeper than just the act, and guess what that will get you? You will have more willingness from their will if you will deal with the heart than if you just deal with the act. Proverbs 20 verse 30 says, the blueness of the wound cleanses away evil, so do stripes the inward parts of the belly. In this verse, we see another aspect of spanking.

It really is the same aspect as the last verse was saying, but it's just put in a little bit different way. Here it says, cleanse away evil and cleanse the inward parts of the belly. See those words? Basically what God is saying there is that spanking will clear the conscience of your child.

May I give you an encouragement? Give your child a revival. Give your child a revival. I'm sure that you know what I'm talking about.

You parents that are here, you adults that are here, you know what a revival is. You know what it's like when God begins to deal with your own heart, maybe at a revival meeting. Maybe it's in your closet in the morning.

Maybe it comes after some failure in your life and you go fall on your face in your closet. You break your heart before God. You weep over your need.

You repent of it. You get your heart clean, washed by the blood of the Lamb. You yield your heart fresh and new to God.

Guess what you feel like when you come out of your closet? Clear and free and full of joy and grateful to God and it's just like everything is all new again. That's what a revival is. Give your child a revival.

Brothers and sisters, the rod of discipline is God's method for producing the same thing in your child. Think with me. Our children do not understand all the things that are involved with getting right with God.

They don't understand the depths of the blood. They don't understand the depths of repentance. Those things are far from them, especially if they're young.

This is God's method to clear the conscience of a child and bring them to that same place where they feel clear, where everything is open, where everything is free, where their heart is broken, where they're yielded, and it just seems like they can start all over again. This is God's method for doing that. This beautiful state of freedom, joy and clearing is exactly what the above verse is describing.

When our children do wrong or transgress our laws, if you do not see it, the conscience becomes guilty. If you do not catch it, their conscience gets guilty. You see, God made the conscience, and the conscience gets guilty when it does wrong.

That's just, we know that. Child has a conscience. God has designed the conscience to function in this way.

When a child's conscience is not clear, a cloud of uncleanness comes over them. If you are a discerning parent, you'll be able to see it on their face. You'll be able to see, something's not right with this child today.

Their confidence doesn't look right. Something isn't right. Sometimes a good, honest talk with mom and dad can clear the air, and wise is the child that will come to their parents and say, dad, I'm not feeling good.

I'm not feeling good. You know, I mean that's a smart child. Something isn't right in here.

Well, let's talk about it. Talk a little bit, issues come out. Pray with the child, and go away free.

However, there are times when the child chooses to keep silent about their wrongs and do them more and more behind your back. If so, the cloud prevails over them, and usually they will get into more trouble. This is when they need a revival.

God has designed the use of the rod to take this child and bring them back to that place of peace and rest, where their life is manifesting peaceable fruits of good and right, like you have taught the child in your home. Give your child a revival. It is results like this that cause the child to say, I have felt so clear and clean all day long.

You know, when you go to put them to bed at night. They've had their revival. They are outside playing now.

They remember how miserable they were for the last three days. Now life is all fine again. The grass is green.

The sky is blue. They're just enjoying playing. They go through the day like that, and you'll hear them say when you put them to bed at night, Papa, thank you for giving me a spanking today.

I have felt so free and so clear ever since you did. You can say, oh, that's so good, my child. I'm so glad you're free and you're clear all the rest of this day.

The bondage of foolishness is a bondage. Do your child a favor and set him free. Let's stand for prayer.

Oh, God, our Father, tonight we come pleading for wisdom and discernment. Lord, I know I probably said some things that some of these parents are scratching their head on. Oh, God, I pray, give light, give insight into the words that I've spoken tonight.

Lord, take those little definitions of what foolishness is and bring them home to the hearts of these parents and open up their eyes, Lord. Open up their eyes. Let them see their children and the actions of their children in a new light from this day forward, Father.

And through that, I pray, you will bring forth pleasant, peaceful, happy children and pleasant little two-year-olds all over this room and, God, all over this country. I pray in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/4o5tcPdUcmw.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/denny-kenaston/15-the-bondage-of-foolishness/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**