



Soul Patterns of the Negative Believer

There are three basic soul patterns of the believer negative to the Word of God and consistent intake and application of Bible doctrine. They are the fool, the sluggard, and the slanderer. While their negative volition is manifested in different ways, the way to spiritual recovery is always the same – confession of known sins to God the Father and return to the teaching of the Word of God. 1 John 1:9.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9, NASB)

The Fool

The fool is the believer without Bible doctrine in the right lobe of their soul. They are guilty of many mental attitude sins. Proverbs 26:1 portrays the fool as analogous to difficulty in an agricultural economy. Snow in summer is detrimental and rain hinders the gathering of harvest.

“Like snow in summer and like rain in harvest, So honor is not fitting for a fool.” (Proverbs 26:1, NASB)

“Like snow in summer” refers to the fool who is attracted to unusual events. They come to church only if they think there will be an unusual or sensational event, message or program. “Like rain in harvest” refers to their very limited potential to produce anything. The principle here is that a believer without Bible doctrine cannot enjoy the various status symbols of life. They want and can’t have or if they have, it rules them. In contrast, when a believer has Bible doctrine in their soul, they can enjoy the details of life such as success, money, sex, health, loved ones, friends, pleasure, social life, materialism, and status symbols.

For the believer without Bible doctrine, these things bring misery. Such a believer thinks well of himself instead of the Lord. They are so in love with themselves that they have no time for others. The result is obvious - they fail to respond to the Lord and therefore react to people with mental attitude sins of jealousy, pride, vanity, vindictiveness, spitefulness, bitterness, and fear. The fool reacts to everything instead of responding to Bible doctrine. They always seem to be upset about something.

In Proverbs 26:1, “honor” refers to prosperity that is not becoming to a fool. Honor is success, recognition, wealth, any of the status symbols of life, or any of the aspects of prosperity. The fool (the believer minus doctrine) cannot stand human prosperity. Why? They have no capacity. Prosperity only increases the folly of the ignorant believer (one who only knows salvation). Prosperity or honor hinders the spiritual production of this type of believer who cannot produce divine good. They produce human good with their money, but only to be noticed, to buy acclaim, etc. “Fool” is כְּסִיל (kesîl) and means stupid, disoriented, full of human viewpoint, stubborn and rebellious. The fool always destroys themselves by having what they consider a good time.

In Proverbs 26:2, “Like a sparrow in its flitting” refers to a restless upset bird, a bird out of its natural habitat. The sparrow feeds on the ground, eats seeds, etc. As long as they stay close to the ground, they are relatively safe. When they fly up in the air with the birds of prey, they’ve had it.

“Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, So a curse without cause does not alight.” (Proverbs 26:2, NASB)

The natural habitat for the believer is Bible doctrine. This verse presents a believer who is a seed picker,



a believer not doctrinally oriented, a believer who has reacted to the Word and has rejected it. The foolish believer, instead of living in the Word, takes out for the wide blue yonder and gets out of their element. They become vulnerable and miserable. “Like a swallow in its flying” is the traveling believer, always flitting to some new place for happiness, always in a frantic search for happiness, but never finding their fountain of youth.

“A curse without cause” refers to a gracious curse comes to the believer negative to Bible doctrine which is divine discipline administered by God. This can also be self-induced misery or even triple compound discipline. This includes any kind of disaster or suffering because the foolish believer does not orient to God’s plan or God’s Word, Bible doctrine.

In Proverbs 26:3, “A whip is for the horse” keeps the horse in line just as a “bridle for the donkey” keeps the donkey in line. For the believer out of fellowship, “a rod for the back of fools” refers to divine discipline administered by God to persuade the carnal believer to confess their known sins to God the Father and to thus return to fellowship - the filling of the Holy Spirit.

“A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the back of fools.” (Proverbs 26:3, NASB)

Some believers wonder why they are a failure and why they’re so unproductive. They are under divine discipline. That’s no way to live! It is God’s responsibility to discipline believers out of fellowship, not ours. Mind your own business. Let God do the disciplining. God hasn’t called us to judge or punish other people. It is God’s responsibility to discipline His children. It is the parent’s responsibility to discipline their children.

Proverbs 26:4 presents the principle of how to handle a fool. “Do not answer” means to not retaliate or lower yourself to their level. “Answer” is אָנַח (anah) and means to reply, to respond, to answer. “Folly” is אִוִּלְתָּ (ivveleth) and means foolishness, folly and refers to mental attitude sins. Don’t answer pettiness for pettiness. If they are full of mental attitude sins, don’t stoop to their level with your own mental attitude sins. Stay away from this type. Bible doctrine gives you something very vital, flexibility. If a believer gossips about you or criticizes you, don’t strike back. The Lord will handle it! Rom. 12:19.

“Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Or you will also be like him.” (Proverbs 26:4, NASB)

“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord.” (Romans 12:19, NASB)

For parents, when you are disciplining your children, don’t get out of fellowship yourself. Gal. 6:1; 1 Tim. 6:5; Rom. 16:17-18.

“Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1, NASB)

“and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.” (1 Timothy 6:5, NASB)

“Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.” (Romans 16:17-18, NASB)

In Proverbs 26:5, “folly” refers to human viewpoint, whereas in Proverbs 26:4 above, “folly” refers to mental attitude sins. The fool operates on human viewpoint. The principle is that you answer human



viewpoint with divine viewpoint Bible doctrine and thus challenge the fool. You answer him because it is a matter of correction. You hit them with divine viewpoint. 2 Cor. 10:5-6; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

“Answer a fool as his folly deserves, That he not be wise in his own eyes.” (Proverbs 26:5, NASB)

“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.” (2 Corinthians 10:5-6, NASB)

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, NASB)

By application to your children, you don't nag them. You don't threaten your children. You don't apologize for a guilt complex. You are either yea or nay. You have the right children, the right doctrine, and you can do the job, regardless.

Proverbs 26:6 speaks of the instability of a fool. This is an idiom verse. When you translate an idiom literally, you come up with absolutely nothing. An idiom has a meaning other than its literal translation. “He cuts off his own feet” refers to a believer who is a detriment to a business. This is a believer who will skin you. You'll come up short. This is a principle that has been ignored in our day and people have been hurt by it. “Drinks violence” is an idiom for loss of business, loss of profit. A reversionistic believer, one constantly out of fellowship, is not dependable, so do not hire them and do not do business with them.

“He cuts off his own feet and drinks violence Who sends a message by the hand of a fool.” (Proverbs 26:6, NASB)

“Sends a message” is an idiom for transaction of business. If you are in any type of executive capacity, don't hire a fool, that is, a believer without doctrine. Hire a stable unbeliever or a believer with doctrine, not a believer continually out of fellowship, in emotional revolt or in reversionism. The principle here is that a fool in your place of business causes loss of profit.

In Proverbs 26:7, “Like the legs which are useless to the lame” means that both legs are not functioning correctly and walking is difficult or impossible. Forward progress is made with difficulty. The “lame” is referring to a spiritually immature believer attempting to communicate Bible doctrine. This type of preacher is always off balance.

“Like the legs which are useless to the lame, So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.” (Proverbs 26:7, NASB)

“Proverb” is מִשָּׁל (mâshâl) which comes from the verb “to rule” and means a point of doctrine that rules the life. This is a title for the Word of God. This is a foolish believer without Bible doctrine trying to teach the Word of God. This is a fool reading a passage of Scripture and trying to make something out of its meaning.

Not only is he confused, but he confuses everyone else by communicating incorrect or false doctrine. The believer out of fellowship has zero progress in the spiritual life. What is worse is that this type of believer is trying to preach out of the Bible. The fool trying to teach the Word causes his congregation to be off balance.

The spiritually immature pastor-teacher cannot mature his congregation. The new convert in 1 Timothy 3:6 is lifted up with pride and cannot mature his congregation. They may get it in beautiful language.



They may get it marvelously illustrated. They may be stimulated emotionally. This results in legalism, sentimentalism, emotionalism, self-induced misery, humanism, reversionism, and emotional revolt.

“and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.” (1 Timothy 3:6, NASB)

Proverbs 26:8 presents a second illustration of an ignorant preacher. “Binds a stone in a sling” refers to loading a sling. There were two types of slings at that time in the ancient world, the hand sling which David used to stun Goliath and the much larger sling used as heavy artillery. By the time of Alexander the Great, they had developed a sling that would throw a 25 lb. rock a 1/2 mile and hit their target.

“Like one who binds a stone in a sling, So is he who gives honor to a fool.” (Proverbs 26:8, NASB)

“Honor” has to do with reward, success symbols of any kind, and prosperity. This could be a preacher being honored by his congregation. Just as a stone is shot and wasted, so honor or recognition to this type of person is just wasted. It is like shooting honor out of the window. If such a fool is honored as great, he really isn’t. A spiritually immature communicator can be honored but it means nothing if he is a fool - disoriented and ignorant of Bible doctrine.

This spiritually immature believer’s communication is being neutralized by the Angelic Conflict. How does it get him? He is asked questions and has to make decisions, but he bluffs or makes continually wrong decisions.

Proverbs 26:9 continues with the preacher who is a fool. “Like a thorn which falls into the hand of a drunkard” refers to the preacher who is not oriented to the plan of God. The drunk doesn’t know what is going on, he doesn’t know what he is doing, and has a thorn in his hand and doesn’t feel it.

“Like a thorn which falls into the hand of a drunkard, So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.” (Proverbs 26:9, NASB)

“A proverb in the mouth of fools” means that when you take a spiritually immature believer who understands only basic Bible doctrines, has not been formally prepared to communicate the Word of God, and attempts to teach Bible doctrine, he is a fool. Such an unprepared preacher can’t tell you what the passage says, but he can try make up for that critical ability by getting emotional, raising his voice, providing beautiful illustrations, and speaking with great eloquence. He can’t handle the passage and he doesn’t know it, so he resorts to programs and gimmicks.

If you have the spiritual gift of evangelist or pastor-teacher, prepare yourself to communicate! You can’t do anything else. If you don’t have the spiritual gift, stay out of trying to communicate the Word of God! Anything is better!

Proverbs 26:10 relates the consequences of hiring a believer who is negative to Bible doctrine to that of an out of control archer who shoots everyone around them. “He who hires a fool” refers to hiring either a spiritually immature believer, a legalistic believer, or a believer negative to Bible doctrine. “Those who pass by” is the Hebrew word עָבַר (abar) and means to pass over, to bypass. This is the believer who bypasses Bible doctrine.

“Like an archer who wounds everyone, So is he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by.” (Proverbs 26:10, NASB)

In Proverbs 26:11, we have the Passover banquet of the fool who always goes back to their folly. This pictures the believer without doctrine who is miserable in human viewpoint and under divine discipline. So in utter desperation, they try attending Bible class. By analogy, they in effect go away from their



vomit and begin again to study the Word. They stick it out grimly for a couple of times, but they really don't like doctrine. They quickly become bored, so they go back to their vomit.

They drink their own vomit with relish. This is the old sin nature in action for a spiritually immature believer. This is the frantic search for happiness. They are focused on the details of life to the exclusion of consistent Bible study. This is the happy-go-lucky type who goes back to their activities (legal or illegal) that please them and are considered their type of fun.

"Like a dog that returns to its vomit Is a fool who repeats his folly." (Proverbs 26:11, NASB)

"Returns" means to repeat something again and again and is the word for reversionism. The fool goes away from where they can learn Bible doctrine. Why? They are a fool. Their priorities are mixed up. They doesn't care for doctrine and so, they are like the dog returning to his vomit, it's his nature.

In 2 Peter 2:22, it is used for the unbeliever going into false teaching. In Proverbs 26:11, it is used of the believer going into false teaching. This is a picture of the immature believer (physically or spiritually) without Bible doctrine in the right lobe of their soul. They are miserable all the time in their human viewpoint. In this analogy, "vomit" is human viewpoint thinking regarding the details of life. "Vomit" is the details of life minus the intake of Bible doctrine and minus the application of Bible doctrine to life! "Vomit" is what you do every evening instead of attending Bible class where Bible doctrine is being taught face-to-face at the local church.

"It has happened to them according to the true proverb, 'A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,' and, 'A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.'" (2 Peter 2:22, NASB)

Vomit is horrible, but there is something worse. What is worse is doing this with added mental attitude sins. In Proverbs 26:12, "wise" is חָכָם (châkâm) and is used four times in Proverbs, three in this chapter: Proverbs 26:5, Proverbs 26:12, Proverbs 26:16, and Proverbs 28:11.

"Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him." (Proverbs 26:12, NASB)

There is something worse than a fool who goes back into their vomit and that is the one who does it with the mental attitude sin of pride. Vomit is the details of life minus doctrine, but worse than this is to have a mind filled with the mental attitude sins of pride, envy, jealousy, hatred, and spite. These mental attitude sins are the greatest hindrance to the Christian way of life and they are the cause of mental problems. The habitual mental attitude sins type believer is also a troublemaker. So, worse than the fool in Proverbs 26:12 is the believer who may be very moral, self-righteous, goody-goody, sincere, sweet, and emotional but loaded down with mental attitude sins.

In Proverbs 26:12, the Hebrew word for "eye" is עַיִן ('ayin) and refers to a believer who is self-righteous, full of pride, full of jealousy, and stuck on themselves. This believer is wise in their own eyes, but not in Bible doctrine. "There is more hope for a fool than for him" refers to the fool who is stupid, feeding on the details of life, and leaving out Bible doctrine completely. The fool still has more going for them than the smart-aleck believer bloated with pride. Worse than the fool is the pseudo wise believer who is full of mental attitude sins, a troublemaker, and destroyer of congregations with their mental attitude sins.

The fool goes back to their details of life; pleasure, bridge, bowling, job, club, etc. They just sit around making themselves miserable and perpetuating their stupidity. They simply do not learn. They do not stay around Bible doctrine long enough for it benefit them. Also, they fail to apply the little doctrine that they do know. The only solution to this is confession of known sins to God the Father and recovery the



filling of the Holy Spirit. Then, claiming God's promises and a return to daily intake of Bible doctrine under the Grace Apparatus for Perception.

The Sluggard

The sluggard believer is one who is idle, lazy, and lacking self-discipline. They are guilty of the sins of the body. A sluggard is one who is capable of getting very busy and has strength to do so, but they lack the will to do anything productive with their mental attitude slowing them down. The sluggard believer often violates the doctrine of privacy.

In Proverbs 26:13, “sluggard” is עצל (‘âtsêl) and means slothful, sluggard, to lean on something, to sit under a shade tree, to be idle by choice, to be lax, to be lazy, to lack motivation. They are the product of their day, absenteeism. The fool believer in the preceding verses is the industrious type, always getting into details, and out every night. The sluggard believer is not tired all the time, but is an example of pure laziness. The sluggard believer cannot hold a job. This is the easy-going, guilt complex, hang-up type, who always has an excuse for everything. Prov. 26:13-19.

“The sluggard says, “There is a lion in the road! A lion is in the open square!”” (Proverbs 26:13, NASB)

The slothful person, the sluggard, is a starter but not a finisher. The slothful person is a promoter of more than they perform. They are lazy. They say, “Oh, I can’t do that, I’m too busy.” The too busy person is always a lazy person without exception. They are excuse oriented. They are overactive, but do not have the self-discipline to carry out a project. The sluggard is a believer with no self-discipline and as a result, they always have excuses for not getting things done. The sluggard has no ability to concentrate and no mental self-discipline. They can’t concentrate on the task at hand and they blame others for not getting the task completed. They can’t enjoy life and always have something hanging over their heads.

The slothful person or sluggard is motivated by fair weather, but stopped by foul weather. They always have an excuse to make up for their lack of activity. They were delayed. They were sick. A friend dropped in. Their spouse didn’t cooperate. They didn’t feel like doing it. Their problem is not so much a matter of priorities, but self-discipline to schedule the application of Bible doctrine to experience. They never understand the concept that many things in life are unpleasant.

In Proverbs 26:13, “a lion in the road” refers to the ancient world where, except for large cities with walls and gates, lions often lived on the edge of town and they sometimes came into town out of curiosity or when they saw small game. When lions came into town, everybody else went indoors until the city watch drove them out or killed them. An average lion weighs about 400-600 pounds, can run 100 yards in about five seconds, can broad jump up to 47 feet and has been known to throw a calf over a 12-foot thorn fence.

The principle here for the sluggard is one of procrastination based on rationalization. The sluggard postpones something that requires self-discipline. It really doesn’t make any difference whether the lion is out there or not. The sluggard is not going to get out of bed. When someone says, “Get up, it’s time to go to work,” they simply roll over and say, “There is a lion in the street.”

The point of doctrine here is that you should get all the difficult things out the way first, then you can really enjoy yourself in whatever you do! The fool can be brought out of their lethargy by the rod, if still under their parents’ jurisdiction as can the slothful person. However, if an adult, only a pastor-teacher can do it with the rod of the Word of God. Their thinking must be changed from within. Perhaps you



should analyze the situation in your life and ask this question, “What are the lions in your street?” Everybody has them, the lions, the things that keep us from doing things that should be done.

Proverbs 26:14 illustrates a believer who lacks initiative and is without discipline and is structured as a parabolic distich where the first line gives the illustration and the second line gives the point of doctrine. “As a door turns upon its hinges” is an illustration of a person who lack self-discipline and concentration and is lazy. The action of the door is always connected with the hinges. All the action of the slothful person is association with their bed. They don’t want to work, so they avoid it. They roll over in the bed and that is about all the effort they ever put forth. Maybe when they get tired of sleeping in that position, they roll back just like an unlatched door on a hinge. A slothful person lacks self-discipline, lacks concentration, and lacks initiative.

“As the door turns on its hinges, So does the sluggard on his bed.” (Proverbs 26:14, NASB)

All young believers have rusty hinges and lions which can only be conquered by self-discipline. We do what we want to do. We make time for it. We scrounge for it. We get together with the people that we want to be with. We get out of doing the things we don’t want to do by procrastinating and by postponing making a decision. The sluggard believer will try to get out of work by being ill or not feeling well, by failing to show up, by refusing to be responsible for their actions, by rationalization, or by telling an outright lie. For children, this pattern has to be broken in the teen years. They should take the most difficult courses. They should take verbal communication courses. They should learn to think on their feet.

Proverbs 26:15 presents the believer who has the wrong mental attitude, has to be spoon fed, and has no initiative to get into the Word of God on their own. Obviously, the sluggard believer has a rotten mental attitude. The principle here is that you work in order to eat, if you don’t work you should not eat. 2 Thess. 3:10.

“The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again.” (Proverbs 26:15, NASB)

“For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10, NASB)

In Proverbs 26:15, “dish” is צלחת (tsallachath) and means literally a bowl or dish. In the ancient world they did not have the fork and spoon as we have it today. They used a knife to cut with, but they ate with their hands. They put their hand into a dish to bring the food to their mouth.

“He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again” refers to a believer who is hungry enough to put their hand into the dish, but it’s such a great effort to put it into their mouth. It wearies them in their mental attitude to expend so much effort. They have the strength, but they are fouled up in their thinking. It isn’t describing a sick person, but a person lacking self-discipline. For them, working to eat is a strain on their mental attitude. Actually it is saying that working on a job to make a living is difficult in their thinking. This is the welfare type!

In Proverbs 26:16, we have the active slothful person guilty of mental attitude sins. This is the pattern of the slothful or sluggard. They think in terms of themselves as smarter, greater, and better than anyone else in the world. They try to straighten everyone else out.

“The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can give a discreet answer.” (Proverbs 26:16, NASB)



“Wiser in his own eyes” refers to the sluggard’s fantastic imagination. They have a lot of schemes, but they won’t work. They are filled with pride in their own abilities. They always have the fantastic pattern for success in their overactive brain, but they never carry it out. They are out of step with the plan of God and divine viewpoint because they are continually in carnality due to their mental attitude sins. They know more than God knows about it. In practice, they act as if they need no help from God on anything.

“Than seven men who can give a discreet answer” is an idiom used two ways. Academically means seven people at the top of their class. They consider themselves smarter than those at the top of the class, although they are not. Politically means the top men in the king’s council, the seven advisers of the king.

The sluggard is irrational. They are energy personified as long as they can sit on their duff. The sluggard cannot be taught. They are unteachable. Everyone is stupid in comparison. This is the know-it-all type who must learn self-discipline or there is no hope for them.

In Proverbs 26:17, we have the same sluggard, but now we see they also like to violate the privacy of others with their unsolicited “expert” advice. The sluggard is very lax in their own body discipline and personal affairs, but is very energetic in other’s affairs. They are too lazy to get involved with constructive work around the local church, but they have plenty of time to be trouble-makers.

“Like one who takes a dog by the ears Is he who passes by and meddles with strife not belonging to him.” (Proverbs 26:17, NASB)

They know everything and consider themselves God’s gift to others. They like to tell everyone how to run their business. They have an opinion on everything. The less they know about a subject the more dogmatic they seem to be. “Passes by and meddles” is עָבַר (abar) in the hithpael and means to stick your nose into someone’s affairs.

In Proverbs 26:18, we have the sluggard from the previous verse, but now they go berserk and become quite destructive in many ways. “Madman” is לִהְלֵא (lihlea) and means to burn, to be rabid, to be insane, to faint from the exhaustion of frenzy, one who faints in their mind, mentally weary. This illustrates the young (physically or spiritually) believer who is slothful, a sluggard who is filled with mental attitude sins and then one day cracks and goes berserk. They go insane. Insanity in a believer is almost exclusively caused by mental attitude sins. Mental attitude sins put pressure on the mind.

“Like a madman who throws Firebrands, arrows and death,” (Proverbs 26:18, NASB)

This berserk believer “throws Firebrands, arrows and death” and means they pick up their bow and go down the street shooting arrows into people. “Throws” is יָרָא (yârâ) and means to shoot an arrow. “Firebrand” is זֶהָ (zêq) and means a flash of fire, a burning arrow. These are arrows designed to start a destructive fire. “Arrows” are dangerous projectiles meant to pierce, to wound. “Death” means to cause destruction motivated by vengeance. This is destruction of reputations, destruction of a teaching ministry, to do anything to defame, to degrade, to berate.

What are we to do about these highly negative and troublesome believers? In Romans 16:17-18, “turn away from them” is the present active imperative of ἐκκλίνω (ekklinō) and means to keep on turning away, to shun, to avoid. We are to mark them out, spot them, and then avoid them. This is a mandate. You are commanded to stay away from this type. Isolation is a corrector of this type of person.

“Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of



the unsuspecting.” (Romans 16:17-18, NASB)

Proverbs 26:19 presents the person who deceives others and when found out, claims they didn't mean it all and they were only joking. “Deceives” is רָמָה (ramah) and means to cause someone harm, to hurl, to shoot, to delude, to betray. In the qal stem *ramah* means to shoot with a bow. In the piel stem, *ramah* means to cause trouble for others or to inflict violent misery on someone. This believer may slander, gossip, criticize, and judge. They use their tongue like the madman uses his bow and arrow. The sluggard or slothful believer is guilty of mental attitude sins and this leads to the sins of the tongue.

“So is the man who deceives his neighbor, And says, “Was I not joking?”” (Proverbs 26:19, NASB)

“Was I not joking?” is in the piel stem and indicates lots of sincerity and emotion. They run around causing damage and when they realize what they have done, they become sincere, emotional, and very sorry for it all, “I was only kidding.” They are like the kid who doesn't want a spanking so he says, “I'm sorry” and wiggles off his mother's lap. You need to get some discernment about those who are always sorry for what they did.

The person who lives on sincerity and emotion will do it again and again and again. That is why Romans 16:17 says, “stay away from them.” Avoid them, unless you are married to them and then you have a different problem. We have all had people who come up and tell us they are very sorry that they damaged us, slandered us and then say, “I didn't really mean it.” Unfortunately, they will do it again and again. Bible doctrine is the only thing that will change these negative believers, but they will not seek the teaching of Bible doctrine. They remain in reversionism.

The Slanderer

The slanderer is described in Proverbs 26:20-28. The slanderer is the believer guilty of the sins of the tongue including maligning, gossiping, and judging. They make a mockery of the Word of God.

In Proverbs 26:20, “For lack of wood” refers to sins of the tongue based on the thinking and the words of the reversionist motivated by their mental attitude sins. “The fire goes out” is an analogy that refers to the believer on the receiving end of the sins of the tongue who has taken the sins of the tongue made against them and puts it all into the Lord's hands. Where you don't bite or react to the slanderous words and stay in fellowship, the fire goes out. 1 Peter 5:7; Rom. 12:19.

“For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.” (Proverbs 26:20, NASB)

“casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7, NASB)

“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord.” (Romans 12:19, NASB)

“Whisperer” is רָגַן (râgan) in the Hebrew and means one who bears a tale, a whisperer, a slanderer. “Contention” is מַדּוֹן (mâdôn) and means to act as an umpire, as a judge, to contest, to quarrel, to cause discord, to cause strife. “Quiets down” is שָׁתָק (shâthaq) and means to subside, be calm, to cease, to be quiet. When you don't bite by lowering yourself to their level, the fire goes out. You are to be above that in the spiritual life.

In Proverbs 26:21, “Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire” refers to the slanderer believer as a cause of discord among believers. When another believer wrongs you, they are like a hot ember. If you apply the Bible doctrine in your soul, you do not react and the situation does not escalate. However, if you retaliate or become bitter, then you become a hot ember also and the situation escalates quickly.



“Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.” (Proverbs 26:21, NASB)

“Contentious” is again מִדּוֹן (mâdôn) and means to act as an umpire, as a judge, to contest, to quarrel, to cause discord, to cause strife. “Strife” is רִיב (rib) and means to wrangle, to hold a controversy, to chide, to ignite trouble. They seek to drag you down to their level. You in effect make wood for their fire when you get out of fellowship. They may say you’re hotheaded and have a temper, but then they’ll try to trap you and provoke you to behave just as they said you would. James 3:5-6.

“So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.” (James 3:5-6, NASB)

In Proverbs 26:22, we see the hypocrisy of the slanderer. As in Proverbs 26:20, “whisperer” is רָגָן (râgan) and means one who bears a tale, a whisperer, a slanderer. “Dainty morsels” is לֶחֶם (lâham) and means to eat a dainty pie, very tasty, delicious. Literally, the words of the slanderer are like eating dainty morsels and tasty pastries. The dainty morsels are the slander of the person who wrongs you motivated by the mental attitudes of jealousy and hatred. Everyone listens to them and they swallow them.

“The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.” (Proverbs 26:22, NASB)

The slanderer is usually talking about someone who is absent. They don’t like the targeted person and so won’t be objective. Certain listeners swallow the facts, especially if they have some memory of the person wronging them. They are talking about someone else and people believe what they want to believe. If you don’t care for them, you’ll buy it. If you like the person being slandered, you’ll defend them and you should mention that slandering or gossiping about others is a sin and you should not condone it while present. That is the great thing about Bible doctrine being applied in the spiritual life.

This is an example of how the slanderer works in a local church. Let’s say the pastor isn’t liked by a few believers because he didn’t call on someone’s sick cousin. So they start something and others have some complaint and before long you have a group gathered together against the pastor. The slanderer is usually so dainty, so pleasant, so sweet and says things like, “I love the pastor and think he is a great Bible teacher, but.....!” Watch out for sweet, nice, pleasant believers who drool words of sugar. These are the “I love you” kind. The kind that pounce on new people in the church.

In Proverbs 26:23, the slanderer has hot lips, very sweet on the outside, but vicious underneath, has a rat nature, and a wicked heart. This verse contains two illustrations of the previous verse. The “earthen vessel” is the slanderer who loves to pull the wool over the eyes of people. The slanderer is always sweet, talks about the gentle Jesus, loves everyone, talks about being compassionate, and just oozes sweetness and light. Just like a silver vase is a beautiful facade, underneath they are a rat filled with mental attitude sins. Beware of overly sweet people for they may be vicious underneath. The slanderer is rotten on the inside and appears beautiful on the outside.

“Like an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross Are burning lips and a wicked heart.” (Proverbs 26:23, NASB)

The slanderer is the original hot lips with “burning lips” or “lips on fire with love.” This is a bird with a fast line and knows how to talk love. An ignorant or naive woman who is not discerning enough to be suspicious will fall flat on her face for a guy with this great line.



In Proverbs 26:24, we see the slanderer's coordination between mental attitude sins and sins of the tongue. A slanderer is a sweetheart full of hate and deceit. They are so filled with mental attitude sins and scar tissue that they can't think straight.

"He who hates disguises it with his lips, But he lays up deceit in his heart." (Proverbs 26:24, NASB)

"He who hates" is שונא (śânê') and means a personal intense hatred, to detest, to have enmity. "Disguises" is נָכַר (nakar) and means to act or treat as foreign, to disguise. The slanderer disguises their hateful mental attitude sins in their mind with smooth words. "Deceit" is מִרְמָה (mirmâh) and means deceptive, false, a fraud, guile, to be treacherous. The slanderer keeps their deceit hidden in their soul. When they can no longer keep the lid on their mental attitude sins, they erupt as sins of the tongue.

In Proverbs 26:25, we have the phony believer who is always nice. "When he speaks graciously" means literally when they make their voice sweet, to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior, to speak graciously. This is totally different than the actual character of the person. "Do not believe him" means you should never trust him because he has "seven abominations in his heart." These "abominations" are mental attitude sins within the right lobe of their soul or "heart." Prov. 6:16-19.

"When he speaks graciously, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart." (Proverbs 26:25, NASB)

"There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, A false witness who utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers." (Proverbs 6:16-19, NASB)

A person with full saturation of hate, bitterness and sins of the tongue, can be very nice, gracious, smiley, very helpful, and you may call them a great Christian! The slanderer brings on their own divine discipline.

In Proverbs 26:26, the slanderer exposes himself by his own words. No one has to expose this type. He exposes himself. "Though his hatred covers itself with guile" means he talks love while he thinks hate. His hatred is being covered up with deceit. "His wickedness" is רָעָה (raah) and means vicious evil. These are his mental attitude sins. Psalms 55:21.

"Though his hatred covers itself with guile, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly." (Proverbs 26:26, NASB)

"His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords." (Psalms 55:21, NASB)

"Will be revealed before the assembly" is גָּלָה (gâlâh) and means to denude, to uncover, to strip a captive, to advertise openly, to exhibit. It is in the niphal reflexive and means he exposes himself. The slanderer talks love, but they are running down other people. They say, "They're okay, but...!" They make friends fast, but others always catch on. They are regarded as a phony. They are always blaming everyone else, even the devil.

In Proverbs 26:27, we see the judgment of the slanderer. This is a very clear verse and well translated! The slanderer digs their own grave. When you retaliate or seek vengeance, you just dig a pit and jump in it. You hurt yourself. Like Sisyphus rolling a stone uphill. He finally gets it uphill and then it turns and crushes him. Forget about seeking vengeance. You can never hurt someone else as much as you hurt yourself. Forget it!



“He who digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.” (Proverbs 26:27, NASB)

In Proverbs 26:28, we have the conclusion of the slanderer. This is the perspective of the sins of the tongue. “A lying tongue hates those it crushes” means they love to malign, to smear, and to vilify. Literally, a lying tongue hates an innocent victim. “A flattering mouth works ruin” refers to a patronizing tongue that destroys through lies and flattery. This has to be the modern dating game as per Proverbs 7.

“A lying tongue hates those it crushes, And a flattering mouth works ruin.” (Proverbs 26:28, NASB)

“That they may keep you from an adulteress, From the foreigner who flatters with her words.” (Proverbs 7:5, NASB)

“And I saw among the naive, And discerned among the youths A young man lacking sense,” (Proverbs 7:7, NASB)