
Ecclesiastes 10:1: “Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour”

First: The perfumed ointment: The making of a fragrant ointment takes time, skill, and the right ingredients. Ex: Think about the art and skill of the apothecary or perfumer who made the “The Holy Anointing Oil” for the tabernacle of the congregation.

This holy anointing oil was NOT just some spices instantly thrown together, but precise measurements of specific ingredients mixed together; as directed by God to Moses; all by the art and skill of the apothecary. *Exodus 30:22-38*

This holy ointment gave off a sweet fragrance; it was NOT for common use, but only before the Lord in the tabernacle of the congregation.

Next: Solomon describes the effects of “a little folly or foolishness” on someone who has an honorable and wise reputation in the imagery of dead flies in the ointment.

Even though it was ONLY “a little folly” and “a brief moment of foolishness” the effect is significant! What was once a sweet smelling and fragrant ointment is NOW full of the stench a few dead flies!

First, from Exodus 30, understand that it took time, and the art and skill of the apothecary, along with specific spices to create the ointment.

Christian, a godly, wise, and honorable reputation doesn’t just happen, it won’t come to any without “the best graces” of heaven.

The Words and love of Christ, holiness, humility, integrity, pureness and singleness of heart; these are necessary graces; as the apothecary mixes the sweet spices, these graces must be cultivated into your heart and life; practiced by your obedience.

When these graces become part of your life, God’s wisdom has entered into your heart, and knowledge has become pleasant to your soul! This is how wisdom and honor (from God) comes to any of us.

Wisdom is God’s truth (practically and rightly) lived in the life of the one who possesses it. One who is “honorable” has a good reputation; highly esteemed, and worthy of respect and admiration.

The “wisest and most honorable” ones in the world are so, because they know and see themselves before “The All Wise God” as nothing and worthy of no honor at all!

But even wisdom and honor which God gives to us can be instantly lost by one little act of foolishness!

Exodus 30:36: Of those necessary sweet spices: “Thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: and it shall be unto you most holy”

For this ointment to have a pleasing fragrance before the Lord, the mixture had to be tempered or crushed to pieces, and then beaten very small. (That's where I will meet with you, saith the LORD)

One cannot but think of the Lord Jesus, bruised, crushed, and beaten for our iniquities and sins. There was no sin, no blemishes, not one ounce of folly in Christ, no flies in this precious ointment, but He was a sweet smelling sacrifice unto God! "PRECIOUS"

Beloved, if we would keep ourselves from the sins of folly/foolishness, if we would honor God in our lives and be a sweet fragrance unto God, we must first be brought low for our sins, put away the little sins!

We must be humbled and beaten very small before our Father and our God; like these sweet spices when crushed under the hand of the apothecary, under his mortar and pestle.

These sweet spices will ONLY give forth their sweet aroma and fragrance after they have been crushed and beaten very small.

The sweet graces of Christ will only come forth from a humble heart that abhors all manner of sins; especially the little sins of foolishness.

Therefore, keep yourself AWAY FROM ALL foolishness/folly; it will ruin your testimony and reputation (make it to stink), like a few little flies, which will corrupt and ruin precious ointment and make it stink.

Song 2:15: "It's the little foxes that spoil the vines"

1 Corinthians 5:6: "A little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump"

Ecclesiastes 9:18B: "One sinner destroyeth much good"

Genesis 34:30: The sin of Simeon and Levi made Jacob to stink among the inhabitants of the land.

Derek Kidner: "It takes far less time to ruin something than to create it"

Ecclesiastes 10:2-3: Here Solomon sets before us the wise hearted in contrast to those who are of a foolish heart. Cf. Ecclesiastes 2:13-14

Solomon contrasts wisdom and folly as having our heart either at our right hand or at our left hand.

He is certainly not teaching us that left-handed people are fools!

The idea here is; the wise, are so because they are led by godly wisdom into the good and right ways of the Lord, but fools go astray because their hearts are full of foolishness.

A wise man's heart inclines him to do what is right; a fool's heart inclines him to that which is wrong; so important to protect your heart!

Proverbs 4:23-27

But that we must "rightly" keep our hearts from sin and wickedness; and from dead flies (little sins) corrupting our Christian testimony and reputation.