

DEFIANT FOOLS

April 1st is commonly said to be "April Fools' Day". This day is often celebrated by playing practical jokes and spreading hoaxes. Christians often in jest, say that April 1st is the holiday for atheists because the Bible says, **"The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"** (Ps. 14:1; 53:1)

There are actually two possible ways to understand this. Commonly, it is taken as the idea that the fool says to himself that God does not exist and therefore lives accordingly. In this view "There is no God" is an intellectual position. But it could also be (and I think preferably so) understood as DEFIANCE with the nuance being that the fool says "NO" to God. Given the context a strong argument can be made that this is the better view.

Thus, the fool says NO to God's truth, NO to divine standards, NO to God's authority. The fool assumes the position of DEFIANT REBELLION. And at core this is a "Lordship" issue. The rebel defies the Lordship authority of God.

Cain is a great example of a DEFIANT FOOL. It's not that Cain didn't intellectually believe in God - he did! He was upset that God did not accept his self-willed offering. So, the LORD came and reasoned with Cain, **"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."** (Gen. 4:7) Cain knew full well the reality of God and what God wanted.

Cain faced a choice of whether he would submit to God or whether he would defy Him. In the end his actions showed that he said, "NO GOD" and thus played the part of the FOOL. It was a Lordship issue!

There are "intellectual fools" but in reality, all fools are DEFIANT of God. And apart from the GRACE of God we are all in the position of being a fool. In fact, those who are saved by the grace of God are only fools who have been turned. In Psalm 14 the LORD finds that **"all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one"** (Ps. 14:3). This is the natural state of the entire human race (cf. Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:10-12). Apart from the GRACE of God, the whole of humanity is but a bunch of REBEL FOOLS who defy the Lordship of God. This is mankind's fundamental problem! We are born rebel fools and apart from conversion, we will die in that state.

But of all the forms of DEFIANT FOLLY, there is perhaps nothing more offensive to God than those who CLAIM to be Christian and yet live like

practical atheists. Somewhere I picked up this quote from a Russian Christian:

"We find the most terrible form of atheism, not in the militant and passionate struggle against the idea of God Himself, but in the practical atheism of everyday living, in indifference... We often encounter these forms of atheism among those who are formally Christians."

God help us not to play the part of the fool in any way, shape, or form! Many years ago George Matheson wrote: **"Make me a captive, Lord, and then I shall be free. Force me to render up my sword, and I shall conqueror be."** At core, the folly of rebellion is a Lordship issue.

The attitude of the rebel fool is depicted in Psalm 12:4...

Psalm 12:4 (NKJV)

4 Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips are our own; Who is lord over us?"

People come hardwired with the concept of God (Rom. 1). And we come born as rebel fools who must be converted. In the end, God holds the entire world accountable for the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:8-9). Only the GRACE of God can turn a DEFIANT FOOL into one who is SUBMISSIVELY WISE! Only God can turn FOOLS into trophies of GRACE.