

Studies in the Book of Proverbs by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

(#181) The Proverbs of Solomon 26:18-19- Impractical Jokes

Proverbs 26:18-19:

Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death, is the man who deceives his neighbor, and says, 'I was only joking!'

A "madman" is a person who is out of control because he/she isn't bothered by moral restraint, sympathetic feeling, or consideration for others. Anyone who indiscriminately "throws" around "firebrands" (or torches, bombs), "arrows" (or bullets, missiles), "death" (or ieds, drones, or other instruments of death) leaves a path of burned, wounded, or dead people! It does not excuse such behavior by simply saying, "I was only joking!"

So-called "reality" TV shows that see "what people would do" set a standard of lies, deceit, and trickery that hardens the consciences of their audience against good judgment and sympathy. When angels of God warned Lot that Sodom would be destroyed for its perversions:

Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, 'Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!' But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking. ([Genesis 19:14](#))

When something is taken as a "joke," then the responses to it are not real, and in their case, they died because of it! Christians are not to participate in such madness:

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ([Ephesians 5:3-6](#))

Such behavior doesn't become a Christian. What is condemned is:

- "Filthiness" which is behavior without morals;
- "Foolish talking" which is empty conversation that shows contempt or ridicule;
- "Coarse jesting" which is the double-entendre, underhanded, turned meaning of words.

All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.



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All of these are what worldly comedy, practical jokes, and other types of madness are made of. Christians can have “fun,” just not like “a madman.”

Do not be deceived by “empty words” that say otherwise, God will hold each individual responsible for his/her behavior on: “the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ” (**Romans 2:16**). No joke!

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