

# WISDOM FOR A BALANCED LIFE Text: Ecclesiastes 7:15-29

*A Balanced Life grounded in the Truth of God rather than the Extremes Self*

Introduction:

—Bill Turner

1. Jack Benny was given an award... and when he accepted it, he sad: “I don’t deserve this award, but I have arthritis, and I don’t deserve that either.”
2. Sometimes we do get what we deserve...  
—other times we get what we don’t deserve...  
—Or we get what others deserve or they get what we deserve

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## I. WISDOM HELPS YOU HAVE A BALANCED LIFE (v.15-18)

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### A. EVEN WHEN LIFE IS NOT FAIR (v.15) —Life isn’t fair...

1. The 1st death was the 1st murder in the history of the world...  
A man who died because of his faith in God...
  - a) The 1st death — was the first murder — was the first martyr
  - b) Abel was murdered for his faith and worship of God
2. Wisdom faces reality—the way life IS — not just the way it SHOULD be
  - a) Sometimes Life is NOT Fair...
  - b) Sometimes the righteous who suffer and the wicked who prosper
  - c) It Takes FAITH To Trust God Even When Life is Not Fair
3. But Without Wisdom People Don’t Know How to Handle This...  
—So They Go to Two Opposite Extremes...

### B. THESE 2 EXTREMES ARE NOT THE ANSWER TO LIFE PROBLEMS (16-17)

1. Some totally mis-read this...
  - a) Solomon is NOT saying: Be a little righteous and a little wicked!
  - b) He is warning against two extremes... of trying to get what we want
2. SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS <—————> SELF INDULGENCE

**[Both rewriting the story of reality in their own head so they are Hero or Victim/Hero]**

Some think being SELF-RIGHTEOUS Gives the Advantage to get what they want [Pharisees]

Others think Being SELF-INDULGENT gives the advantage to get what they want [Gratification]

3. But Solomon Warns—Both Extremes Will Destroy You!

### C. THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE ANSWER (v.18)

1. God is the source of TRUE WISDOM & RIGHTEOUSNESS—>NOT SELF
  - a) Self-Righteousness and Self-Indulgence are NOT the Answer to Life’s Problems
  - b) The Fear and Reverence of the Lord is the Answer...
2. The Fear of the Lord Accepts that God is in control – He has the final say!

**Wisdom balances life w/ truth — guarding against the extremes of self**

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## II. WISDOM MAKES YOU STRONGER (v.19-22)

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### A. WISDOM GIVES YOU STRENGTH (v.19)

1. **Some Surround themselves w/ powerful people will make them strong...**
  - a) But Even if you surrounded yourself w/ the 10 most powerful people on planet
  - b) You Would be Stronger than all 10 — IF You have True Wisdom from above
2. **WHY? Because You are Grounded on the Rock of Truth—not rewriting the story of reality in your own head so you are always the hero**
3. **Wisdom Lives Life in the Light of Eternity...**
  - a) A Balanced Life grounded in the Truth of God rather than the Extremes Self

### B. STRENGTH TO BE HONEST WITH OURSELVES (v.20)

1. **We expect others to be perfect, but give ourselves a pass...**

*“Selfishness is that detestable vice which no one will forgive in others, and no one is without in himself.” (Henry Ward Beecher)*
2. **Wisdom realizes no one is perfect—including ourselves**
3. **Not everyone is honest w/ themselves, so Solomon gives an example...**

### C. STRENGTH NOT TAKE WHAT OTHERS SAY SO PERSONALLY (v.21-22)

*“If all men knew what each said of the other, there would not be four friends left in the world.” (Pascal)*

1. **Have you ever made an offhanded remark you regretted later?**
  - a) Have You Ever Heard someone make an offhanded remark about you?
  - b) The answer is YES... and YES! This will eventually happen to everyone
2. **But Wisdom gives strength — so you don’t have to be so co-dependent on what everybody else thinks about you!**
  - a) A person is rude to you at the store... or cuts you off in traffic (never done that?!)
  - b) Why should they decide how you feel for the rest of the day?
  - c) And Why Should I Think Everybody Has to Agree with Everything I Say?

*(Proverbs 25:28) Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.*

3. **Your self worth is from God — not the opinions of others!**

The wisdom from above is peaceable gentle willing to yield full of good fruit (James 3:17-18)

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## III. WISDOM PREVENTS THE BLINDSPOT OF PRIDE (23-26)

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### A. KNOWING THE LIMITS OF WISDOM IS A PART OF WISDOM (v.23-25)

1. **There are mysteries that are beyond Human understanding...**
  - a) The more we know, the more we should realize how little we know,
  - b) and that whatever wisdom we gain comes as a gift from God.
2. **And even if we had all knowledge and understood all mysteries...**
  - a) Without Love we are nothing! Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies (1 Corinthians 13)

**3. But Some people hyper-focus on one pet subject in Bible and consider themselves the expert... But they Lack the Wisdom of Big Picture**

- a) It becomes a Blindspot of Pride... No matter what you talk to them about,
- b) it always has to go back to their Rabbit Hole where they're the expert
- c) They See Everything Through their Rabbit Hole — Where They Feel Superior!

***“The most misleading way to feel wise is to feel superior.” —Derek Kinder***

**4. True Wisdom Recognizes the secret things belong to God!**

The secret *things belong* to the Lord our God, but those *things which are revealed belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we may do all the words of this law.* (Deuteronomy 29:29)

**5. Those things He has Revealed are not for us to Boast How Smart We Are!  
—> They Are Revealed So We Will Obey God's Law!**

**B. BUT MANY WHO THINK THEY ARE WISE—STILL FALL (v.26)**

**1. Mr. Worldly Wise-man... Mr. Know-it-all... Mr. I'm smarter than you...  
—Where do they usually end up?**

- In a dark Pit of their own depravity...
- The same dark place Solomon found himself...

**2. Solomon may be speaking from experience here...**

**There may have been a woman who tried to destroy Solomon**

- a) **Maybe like Delilah**—a philistine woman who seduced Samson  
to find out the secret to His strength so they could kill him...
- b) **Maybe like Potiphar Wife**—who tried to seduce Joseph,  
and then accused him of sexual assault

**C. WISDOM WAS NOT ENOUGH TO KEEP SOLOMON FAITHFUL TO GOD**

**1. Notice what happened to the wisest man in history (1 Kings 11:1–8)**

- a) The wisest man in history was destroyed by his own lusts of the flesh

**2. Pride Goes Before the Fall! —and Solomon himself wrote this! (Prov. 16:18)  
But He Fell Into the Same Pit He Warns Us About!**

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## **IV. WISDOM REALIZES THAT NO ONE STANDS RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD (v.27-29)**

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**A. GOOD PEOPLE ARE HARD TO FIND... (v.27-28)**

**1. According to Solomon—almost impossible to find...**

- a) He searched and could not find a wise and upright person... Except 1 in a 1,000  
among men and not one among a thousand in women...
- b) But the number 1,000 is not insignificant here!

**2. But Consider the 1,000 women Solomon surrounded himself with**

- a) **(1 Kings 11:1–3)** Solomon's wives and concubines numbered 1,000.
- b) And they were idol worshippers who led Solomon away from God

3. Solomon is not saying there's more upright men than women—  
—he's saying there is hardly any upright person at all!

**B. BUT THE PROBLEM IS NOT WITH GOD... (v.29)**

1. God Made Human Beings Upright, But We Have Sought Out Many Schemes  
—Schemes to get what we want
2. This was the very temptation in the Garden...
3. to find happiness apart from God, in rebellion to God

**C. NO ONE STANDS RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD**

1. The Law of God is like an x-ray exposing the dark sins of the heart!

- a) *there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.* (7:20)
- b) All have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23)
- c) The wages of sin is death! (Romans 6:23)
- d) Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"? (Prov. 20:9)

**ANSWER: NO ONE!**

2. This is the Problem with the 'Good Person' argument! It is FALSE!

**Even a 'good person' has sinned in their life!**

**and the wages of sin is death!**

- We All Need Salvation from Our Own Sins
- We All Need the Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Blood on the Cross
- We All Need the Grace of God—It is the Only Way we can be saved!
- We Can't Atone for our own Sin—Only Jesus Could Do That!

3. This is Why Jesus Left the Glory of Heaven to Die on a Cross!

**For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 6:23)**

**CONCLUSION:**

Just as the king of the Medes and Persians in Esther could not revoke a law once it was made, but could make another law to counter act the first.

God's law that the penalty of sin is death always stands. But God made a second law to counter act the first - the gift of God is eternal life in Christ.

1. Wisdom gives us strength to live a **Balanced Life...**
2. grounded in the Truth of God—rather than in the Extremes Self