



Signs of Real Wisdom

Ecclesiastes 7:15-29

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www.biblestudydownloads.com

What is your main goal in life?



Solomon Sought Wisdom





Wisdom



What are the **qualities** of
wisdom?

**KNOWLEDGE IS KNOWING
A TOMATO IS A FRUIT.
WISDOM IS NOT PUTTING IT
IN A FRUIT SALAD**

- Miles Kington



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Wisdom is Practical

"Biblical wisdom includes the art of being skillful and successful in one's relationships and responsibilities in life... An individual is 'successful' as he directs his life in accord with God's divine design, His plans for the world."

Roy B. Zuck, *A Biblical Theology of the OT*, 213



Holy Bible

READ
ME!

©



2 reasons

Why should we trust in
God's **plan** for our lives?

The Main Idea of 6:10–7:14

Why trust in God's plan?

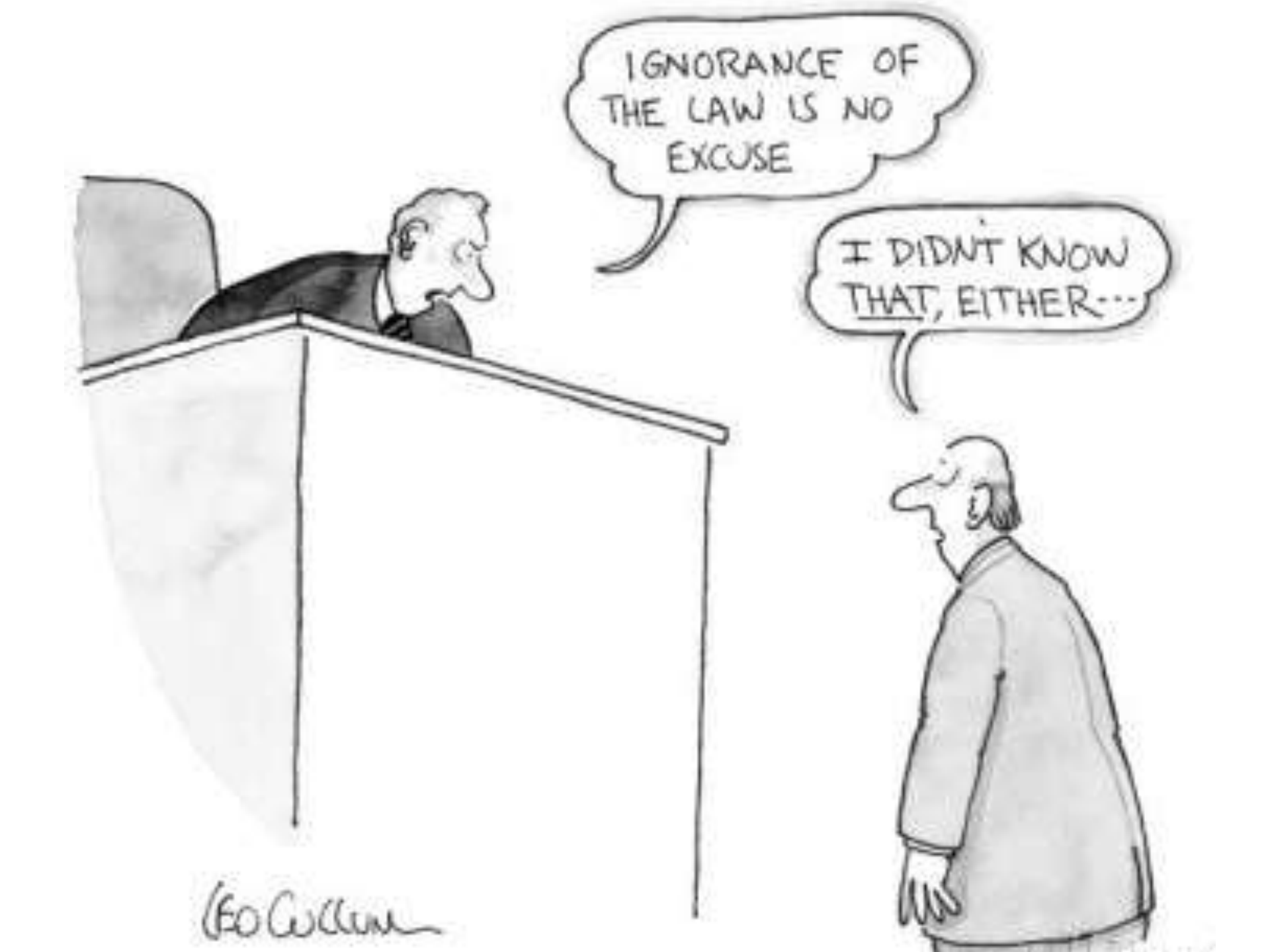


God's plan is **unchanging**
and you are **ignorant** of it.



CAN YOU
TELL ME
ABOUT MY
FUTURE?

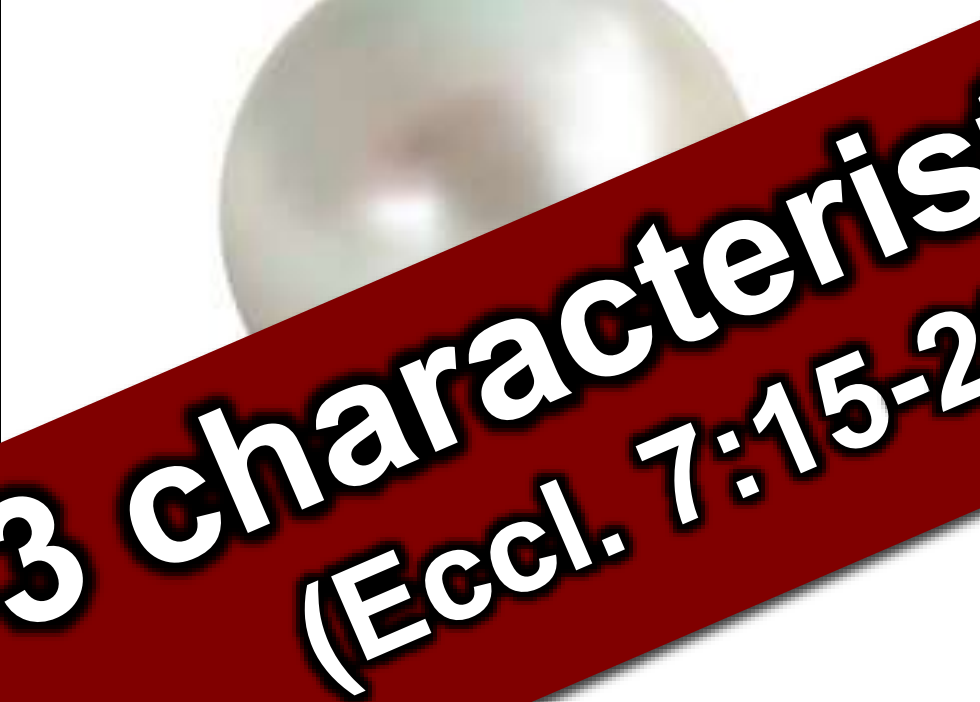
HMMM...
I WOULD,
BUT I CAN'T
READ
CHINESE!



IGNORANCE OF
THE LAW IS NO
EXCUSE

I DIDN'T KNOW
THAT, EITHER...

BO Callen



3 characteristics
(Eccl. 7:15-29)

What are the **qualities** of
wisdom?

I. Wisdom is **balanced**:

Avoid the extremes of depending on righteousness and living in sin (7:15-18).



The Wicked & Godly

**The house of the wicked will be destroyed,
but the tent of the godly will flourish
(Prov. 14:11 NLT)**

**Those who fear the LORD are secure;
he will be a refuge for their children
(Prov. 14:26 NLT)**

Really?

Always?



"I have seen everything in this meaningless life, including the death of good young people and the long life of wicked people."

Eccl. 7:15 NLT



The Righteous Live Long?



The Wicked are Short-Lived?




On a Plane...



**The Solution:
Don't depend on righteousness
or sinfulness (7:16-18).**



"So don't be **too good or **too wise!**
Why destroy yourself?" (7:16 NLT).**



"Though almost universally interpreted [translated] in the sense of 'destroy [NIV] or ruin [NASB] oneself,' the verb in this form never means this elsewhere. Instead it means 'to be appalled or astounded' (cf. Dan. 8:27, 'appalled'; Ps. 143:4, 'dismayed')"
(Glenn, BKC, 994).

"Here comes Mr. 'holier-than-thou.'"

SURNS

1987



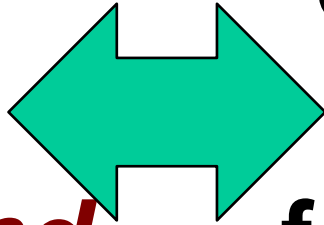
**"On the other hand, don't be
too wicked either. Don't be a fool!**

Why die before your time?"

(7:17 NLT).



"So don't be
too good or
too wise!
Why *astound*
yourself?"
(7:16).



"On the other hand,
don't be **too wicked**
either. Don't be a
fool! Why die before
your time?"
(7:17 NLT).

"Pay attention to these instructions,
for anyone who fears God will avoid
both extremes" (7:18 NLT).

I. Wisdom is **balanced**:

Avoid the extremes of depending on righteousness and living in sin (7:15-18).



II. Wisdom is **strong**:

Avoid the weakness from blindness to your own faults (7:19-22).



"One wise person is stronger than ten leading citizens of a town!" (7:19 NLT).

**One
wise
person**

>

WASHINGTON'S
**10 MOST
WANTED**
CORRUPT POLITICIANS

Wisdom gives strength to see our weaknesses (7:20-22 NLT).

Wisdom avoids perfectionism:

"Not a single person on earth is always good and never sins" (7:20).

Wisdom handles criticism without judging:

**"Don't eavesdrop on others—you may hear your servant curse you.
²²For you know how often you yourself have cursed others" (7:21-22).**

I. Wisdom is **balanced**:

Avoid the extremes of depending on righteousness and living in sin (7:15-18).



II. Wisdom is **strong**:

Avoid the weakness from blindness to your own faults (7:19-22).



III. Wisdom is **insightful**:

Avoid thinking you have all the answers
but still show insight (7:23-29).

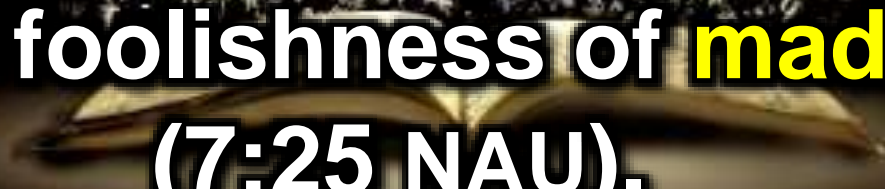


"I have **always tried my best** to let wisdom guide my thoughts and actions. I said to myself, 'I am determined to be wise.' But it didn't work. **24Wisdom is always distant** and difficult to find (7:23-24 NLT).

"**I tested all this** with wisdom, and I said, 'I will be wise,' but it was far from me. **24What has been is remote** and exceedingly mysterious. Who can discover it?" (7:23-24 NAU).

I searched everywhere, determined to find wisdom and to understand the reason for things. I was determined to prove to myself that wickedness is stupid and that foolishness is madness" (7:25 NLT).

I directed my mind to know, to investigate and to seek **wisdom** and an explanation, and to know the evil of **folly** and the foolishness of **madness**" (7:25 NAU).





"I discovered that a seductive woman is a trap more bitter than death. Her passion is a snare, and her soft hands are chains. Those who are pleasing to God will escape her, but sinners will be caught in her snare" (7:26 NLT).



**Wisdom avoids sex outside of marriage
(7:26).**



"'This is my conclusion,' says the Teacher. 'I discovered this after looking at the matter from every possible angle.

28Though I have searched repeatedly, I have not found what I was looking for.

Only one out of a thousand men is virtuous, but not one woman! **29**But I did

find this: God created people to be virtuous, but they have each turned to follow their own downward path"

(7:27-29 NLT).

"Only one out of a thousand men is virtuous, but not one woman"!?!?!?!"

Solomon looked at a thousand people and found one man and no women (NAU)?

Solomon found one upright man and no upright women in a thousand (NIV)?

Solomon found only one man in a thousand who could answer his questions and no women who could provide him fulfillment (Swindoll, *LOTRE* Study Guide, 73).

"Only one out of a thousand men is virtuous, but not one woman"!?!?!?!"

Solomon found one in a thousand wise men but not a single wise woman in his harem of one thousand pagan wives and concubines (cf. 1 Kings 11:1-11)?

Solomon isn't comparing men and women at all but only drawing a complementary parallelism.

"Only one out of a thousand men is virtuous, but not one woman"!?!?!?!"

The word here is not the normal word *ish* for "man/husband" but it's *adam*, generic for "man[kind]." So one human being in a thousand is truly wise (7:28b).

The climax of the point is that "such people—both men and women—are not only scarce but are nonexistent... This is supported by the fact that 'men' in Ecclesiastes 7:29 is 'they' in Hebrew (i.e., both men and women)" (Glenn, *BKC*, 1:996).

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(7:27-29 NLT).



What are the **qualities** of
wisdom?

Main Idea

**Wisdom is
balanced,
strong,
and
insightful.**





Balance: Is wisdom guarding me from extremes?

Strength: Is wisdom keeping me stable?

Insight: Is wisdom clearing my mind to see reality?

Questions

(Swindoll, *Living on the Ragged Edge Study Guide*, 73).

**"The ragged-edge question is not:
Will His wisdom work? But rather:
Are we putting His wisdom to work?"**



(Swindoll, *Living on the Ragged Edge*, 218).

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