

**ECCLESIASTES SERIES TEN**  
**WISE WORDS FOR BUSY PEOPLE**  
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Ecc 6:8a What advantage has a wise man over a fool?

Pro 16:16 How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver!

Q: Who needs wisdom? I've got a few thoughts... Paris Hilton comes to mind.

*Paris* "I know I was on probation for drinking and driving and all.... But I just thought it would be fun to drive 70 mph at night on a revoked license...

↳ The truth is... we are all capable of doing stupid things... and we are all in need of Biblical wisdom.

T>> Allow me to make a few observations about wisdom from Ecclesiastes

Observations

1. Common sense is good but Wisdom is better / or as my daughter say "rocks".

Sometimes people think of wisdom as just good common sense... common sense is good... but it's not the same as wisdom.

(Story) Friend who brought a micro wave Pizza on a camping trip... High IQ, but low common sense... okay. Jay laughed until he couldn't talk... "But it says quick and easy."

↳ Common sense keeps us from eating raw pizza on a camping trips... that's good.... But it's not wisdom

Wisdom is less about being smart or clever, and it's more about living in alignment w/ God's understanding of things...

Def:

○ The ability to see and live with rare godly objectivity.

**Above the Sun**

Ecc 7:11

Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun.

20 times prior to this in Ecclesiastes Solomon uses the phrase "under the sun..." with everyone of them it is something negative... and it is life w/o God's perspective... life without God... is a mist... look at a couple of examples.

Ecc 2:20

So my heart began to despair over all my toilsome labor under the **sun**. (*I just work and work and I can't seem to get enough*) *That's perspective w/o God.*

Ecc 5:13

I have seen a grievous evil under the **sun**: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner,

Ecc 6:12

For who knows what is good for a man in life, during the few and meaningless days he passes through like a shadow? Who can tell him what will happen under the **sun** after he is gone?

He laments all through Ecclesiastes... about a meaningless life w/o God perspective...

Now he comes to the “wisdom” section of his book and he says... and... *remember 20 times he lamented about life under the sun... now*

*Ecc 7:11*

*Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing,... second stanza...  
... and benefits those who see what? The Sun.*

↳ Not under the sun... but to actually see the sun.

This is the essence of wisdom... to see life with godly insight... from God’s perspective.

Picking on Paris Hilton – I know I’m picking on Paris a little. She’s a person... loved by God... but, at first glance we think she just needs some common sense....

~ When you’re on probation for drinking and driving with a suspended license... common sense says don’t get in a car, and go 70 mph at night with your head lights turned off... It could get you in trouble... Stay home watch a movie.

~ Common sense isn’t what Paris is in desperate need of...

Paris’ desperate needs is:

- The ability to see and live with rare godly objectivity.
- Wisdom for her is less about how she’s driving and more concerned about **what’s driving her.**

Wisdom would give her insight into the insecurities driving her... the hole in her soul that she’s trying to fill w/ fame, sex, materialism, or control.

Something is driving her... it drives her to bad places... but she can’t see it.

She can’t see how terribly shallow her life is... and that all the fame and money in the world isn’t going to fix it.

I feel sorry for her

I don’t feel sorry for her because she’s going to spend 30 days in jail... that’ll be good for her... at the very least it’ll keep her out of her car for a while...

*Ecc 5:13*

I feel sorry for her because she is becoming the epitome of Ecc 5:13  
I have seen a grievous evil under the **sun**: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner,

Q: How many of you think more money would help Paris... better lawyer

- Wisdom is: The ability to see and live with rare godly objectivity. (seek it)

T>> *Three areas we need to seek God’s wisdom...*

1 ~ We need the *contentment* wisdom brings

Ecc 7:14

When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, a man cannot discover anything about his future.

Solomon was a guy who struggled w/ contentment probably his entire life. He wanted complete control over his future... we was a chaser... always chasing control over the different parts of his life.

#### Time Management

We are chasers & controllers in our culture... chasing this and that trying to be satisfied  
 We try to control everything in our lives  
 It's led to something very unique in our culture... Time Management

(ILL)

You can get a phone where you can, read your e-mail, while checking your calendar, while listening to down loaded music while on the phone...

Q: And of course we're doing that while we're what..? DRIVING... flying down Oracle trying to turn left on Ina.

Here's the Deal

~ It's possible to have a well managed, discontented, shallow life...

Application

Look at what he says:

*Ecc 7:14a*

When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other.

Pray -

**When times are good** – your health is relatively good, children or doing well.  
 “God, give me the wisdom to see, and appreciate the goodness of what I have.”

~ Countless times we miss the joy of the good times... we're just muddling along and missing the good... Pray for the wisdom to enjoy them.

**When times are bad** – consider – That's a thinking word, it means I've got to apply my mind... how I think and process my thoughts is important.

~ Here's what I've got to consider, What if God is fully aware of the difficulty I'm facing and he has plans for me. – *Does that mean God is responsible for the bad things in my life? Maybe, Maybe not, but that's not the point.*

Friends..

To often the first thing we pray during hard times is God **get me out of this!** Or God why can't you fix this situation, or fix my boss, fix my kid's, heal my body...

W/o realizing it we can end up praying for a manageable life... **“God get my life back to manageable... you know... where I don't need to depend on you.”**

I don't know that God's agenda is always one of giving us more manageable lives.

Q:

What if God is up to something deeper... maybe God is trying to do some transformational kind of work in our life.

Pray -

“God give me the wisdom to submit to your plans, God give me the wisdom to understand the deeper opportunities for how I can grow in this situation.

“God give me the strength to depend on you.” “To know the power of your grace in my daily life...”

2. ~ We need the *spiritual balance* wisdom brings.

Ecc 7:16-17

Do not be over righteous, neither be over wise— why destroy yourself?  
Do not be over wicked and do not be a fool – why die before your time?

Proverbial Paradox

This is Solomon's use of a Proverbial Paradox... It's a little sarcastic... and it uses an apparent contradiction to point to a deeper reality.

You have to read into it at a deeper level... It's not meant to be taken at face value.

So, when he says don't be over righteous... he's not condoning sin.

(ILL)

He's not saying "Paris should wait to drink and drive when she off probation."

~ Here's what he's driving too. It is possible to develop a toxic faith.

You can have the right theology

You can have the right behavior, but have the wrong heart.

We struggle with this in two primary forms: Labor's and Pretenders, We all struggle at some level....

**Labors** –

We know we're saved by grace, but we live out our faith by works... We try to gain a kind of righteousness in our own strength.

It's easy to be fixated on doctrine, and Bible knowledge... winning arguments and having the appearance of righteousness.

**Pit fall:** 1) It's easy to become judgmental, to look at others and see that they are no as far along as we are and think very highly of ourselves.

2) To be filled w/ vast amounts of Biblical knowledge and never apply it in a meaningful way.

Moms wisdom

"Don't become so heavenly minded that you are of no earthly good."

**Pretenders** –

We want to spiritualize everything... we cover over struggles and doubts... Because good Christian would never be sad, or struggle...

**Pit fall:** You just want to hang out with other Christians... and every other sentence ends w/ "Hallelujah", or "isn't the Lord so good"... The Lord helped me find a parking spot at the mall... "Oh isn't the Lord so good."

The Lord is good, and it's very okay to say it... but the problem is when we use it to push away the real work God wants to do in us.

Solomon saw people cultivate a toxic faith. It created an extreme that wasn't from God... even though it had the appearance of being Godly... **but they were not grounding in reality.**

~ Wisdom gives us the balance to stay grounded in reality... To be heavenly mind and of great earthly good, because we are making a difference for the Kingdom.

### 3. ~ We need the protection wisdom provides

Ecc 7:26

I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap and whose hands are chains. The man who pleases God will escape her, but the sinner she will ensnare.

Solomon is speaking specifically about the temptation of an attractive woman seducing some poor guy... but we can apply the principle to any number temptations.

:26a

Look at how he describes this woman... this temptation...

“I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare...”

Q:

How many guys call beautiful seductive women bitter?

Budweiser

How many Budweiser commercials have guys calling beautiful women bitter?

“Hey it’s the Bitter Budweiser Girls”

Solomon calls her bitter not because she’s ugly, but because she’s beautiful.

- Here’s the truth about most temptations... they have some sort of misplaced beauty.

Something good or attractive has been twisted into something misused or misplaced

The wise person can distinguish between beauty, and misplaced beauty.

T>>

Here’s how it works.

### **Traps**

:26b

Q:

“... whose heart is a trap.”

The wise person can distinguish between beauty, and misplaced beauty and understands that misplaced beauty is a... \_\_\_\_\_? trap.

Traps

**Sensual traps** – pornography, adultery – Sexual attraction between a man and woman rightly expressed in marriage is a beautiful thing...

Passionate, wild, intimate attraction lived out between a husband and wife is wonderful... if it’s missing... its reason for great concern in your marriage.

(ILL)

If I’m counseling a couple married for 5 or 10 years and they describe their sex life as mundane or ordinary... that’s a red flag to something deeper...

But that same kind of attraction is mis-placed through pornography, adultery, a relationship outside of marriage... is a trap.

**Materialistic traps** – The drive to work hard, be smart, make money... that’s good... Having wealth is a blessing.... It should cause you to feel blessed and motivated to do something with that wealth to bless others, help the church, and grow God’s kingdom.

But If you mis-place a drive of hard work, smart thinking and success... You can fall into the trap of “The Love Of Money” – It can be a trap.

By the way... how much money you have, has nothing to do with whether you’ve fall into the trap of the love of money, you can be poor, but obsessed with materialism...

~ A wise person sees misplaced beauty. They understand it can be a trap, and they understand something more....

## Consequences

:26c

“whose hands are chains”

~ Wisdom is the ability to play out a temptation past the initial gratification and see the bondage – the consequences.

Back to Paris

“Hey it would be fun to go 70mph at night w/ the head lights off on a revoked license”

But wisdom plays it out past the initial fun... the initial gratification and says – What if a cop sees me, pulls me over, sends me back to the judge and I go to jail? Let’s see would it still be worth it?

Or worse – What if I my stupid action causes a wreck and someone dies... and I go to jail not for 30 days but 10 years... what if I have to face the family and friends of the one I killed???

~ Wisdom sees past the gratification to weight the consequences...

○ Wisdom is: The ability to see and live with rare godly objectivity.

Seek her... pray and seek God’s wisdom... do your best to apply Godly wisdom in all you do... and who knows maybe God will give you more wisdom that you ever imagined.

## Pro 3:13-18

Blessed is the man who finds wisdom,  
the man who gains understanding,

14 for she is more profitable than silver  
and yields better returns than gold.

15 She is more precious than rubies;  
nothing you desire can compare with her.

16 Long life is in her right hand;  
in her left hand are riches and honor.

17 Her ways are pleasant ways,  
and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to those who embrace her;  
those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

End w/ blessing