

The Limitations of Human Wisdom

Ecclesiastes 7:15-29

1. Wisdom magnifies the unfairness of life.

Ecclesiastes 7:15-18 | ¹⁵ In my vain life I have seen everything. There is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his evildoing. ¹⁶ Be not overly righteous, and do not make yourself too wise. Why should you destroy yourself? ¹⁷ Be not overly wicked, neither be a fool. Why should you die before your time? ¹⁸ It is good that you should take hold of this, and from that withhold not your hand, for the one who fears God shall come out from both of them.

2. Wisdom is necessary but often inaccessible.

Ecclesiastes 7:19-25 | ¹⁹ Wisdom gives strength to the wise man more than ten rulers who are in a city. ²⁰ Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins. ²¹ Do not take to heart all the things that people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you. ²² Your heart knows that many times you yourself have cursed others. ²³ All this I have tested by wisdom. I said, "I will be wise," but it was far from me. ²⁴ That which has been is far off, and deep, very deep; who can find it out? ²⁵ I turned my heart to know and to search out and to seek wisdom and the scheme of things, and to know the wickedness of folly and the foolishness that is madness.

3. Wisdom makes known our fallen nature and need for redemption.

Ecclesiastes 7:26-29 | ²⁶ And I find something more bitter than death: the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her. ²⁷ Behold, this is what I found, says the

Preacher, while adding one thing to another to find the scheme of things—²⁸ which my soul has sought repeatedly, but I have not found. One man among a thousand I found, but a woman among all these I have not found.²⁹ See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.