



[Ecclesiastes 5:1-7](#)

(1) Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. (2) Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. (3) As a dream comes when there are many cares, so the speech of a fool when there are many words. (4) When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. (5) It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it. (6) Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? (7) Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore stand in awe of God.

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In order to fit within the context of the preceding verses, “dreams” in verse 7 does not mean the random mental activity a person has while sleeping and over which he has little or no control. Rather, it indicates the wanderings of a person's mind while seemingly fully awake—in other words, daydreams. For the most part, daydreams are nothing but sheer vanity, time-wasting drifts of the mind that lead nowhere positive. While daydreaming, we are not focused and disciplined, which is the opposite of what [God](#) desires of us.

Something else is of interest here. This verse contains both the major concepts that the book begins with, that is, vanity, and the thought or goal the book ends with, “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” Halfway through the book, Solomon is directly declaring what the urgent aim of every life needs to be. We need to proceed from the meaninglessness of an under-the-sun life to the fulfillment of life's purpose through fearing God, as shown in living an over-the-sun life.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

The way to get and stay right with God is encapsulated in these seven verses. It can be stated in three simple principles:

1. Do not just hear God; *listen* to Him carefully with focused attention.
2. Speak with a matching level of focused attention.
3. Follow through in obedience to what we vowed when we committed ourselves to making the New Covenant.

A tension exists in what Solomon counsels us regarding our [relationship with God](#). Though we may not think of it all the time, we understand that, for our own good, God demands our highest allegiance. We willingly accept that because we believe [the gospel](#), knowing who He is and what He offers us. However, being human, we are sometimes easily distracted. There are times that we would rather do almost anything else short of an outright [sin](#) than to listen attentively to what God says.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Ecclesiastes and Christian Living \(Part Six\): Listening](#)

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[Dreams](#)

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