



## [Ecclesiastes 7:15-18](#)

(15) In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these:  
a righteous man perishing in his righteousness,  
and a wicked man living long in his wickedness. (16) Do not be overrighteous,  
neither be overwise—  
why destroy yourself? (17) Do not be overwicked,  
and do not be a fool—  
why die before your time? (18) It is good to grasp the one  
and not let go of the other.  
The man who fears God will avoid all extremes .  
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If one misjudges in the manner of the paradox described here and therefore reacts wrongly, the effect could lead to one of two possible spiritual extremes. Thus, Solomon gives his cautions.

Perhaps these possible alternatives can be illustrated this way: Imagine a horizontal line drawn across a blank sheet of paper. Both the beginning of the line on the left and the end of the line on the right represent extreme reactions as well as the results produced should a person make wrong choices within the trial.

One can react radically to the left, becoming completely liberal, by choosing simply to give up. The result would be spiritual death. The other extreme reaction would be to choose to turn sharply right, becoming righteous over much, and the bad fruit also produces spiritual death.

Why? Because either extreme is rebellion against God's grace. In Psalm 73, Asaph neither gave up nor attempted to become super-righteous so that [God](#) would be impressed and owe him the blessing of relieving the pressures of his suffering. He chose a path right down the middle, to trust God.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Ecclesiastes 7:15-18 (<http://www.theberean.org>)  
Turning to the right to become over-righteous is the choice we should be more concerned about. Why? Because most of the truly converted will not simply give up. They may become weary and confused, but they will not walk away from God's mercy.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[Ecclesiastes and Christian Living \(Part Twelve\): Paradox, Conclusion](#)**

**Related Topics:**

[Becoming Overly Righteous](#)

[Ecclesiastes and Christian Living Paradox](#)

[Super Righteousness](#)

[Trusting God](#)

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