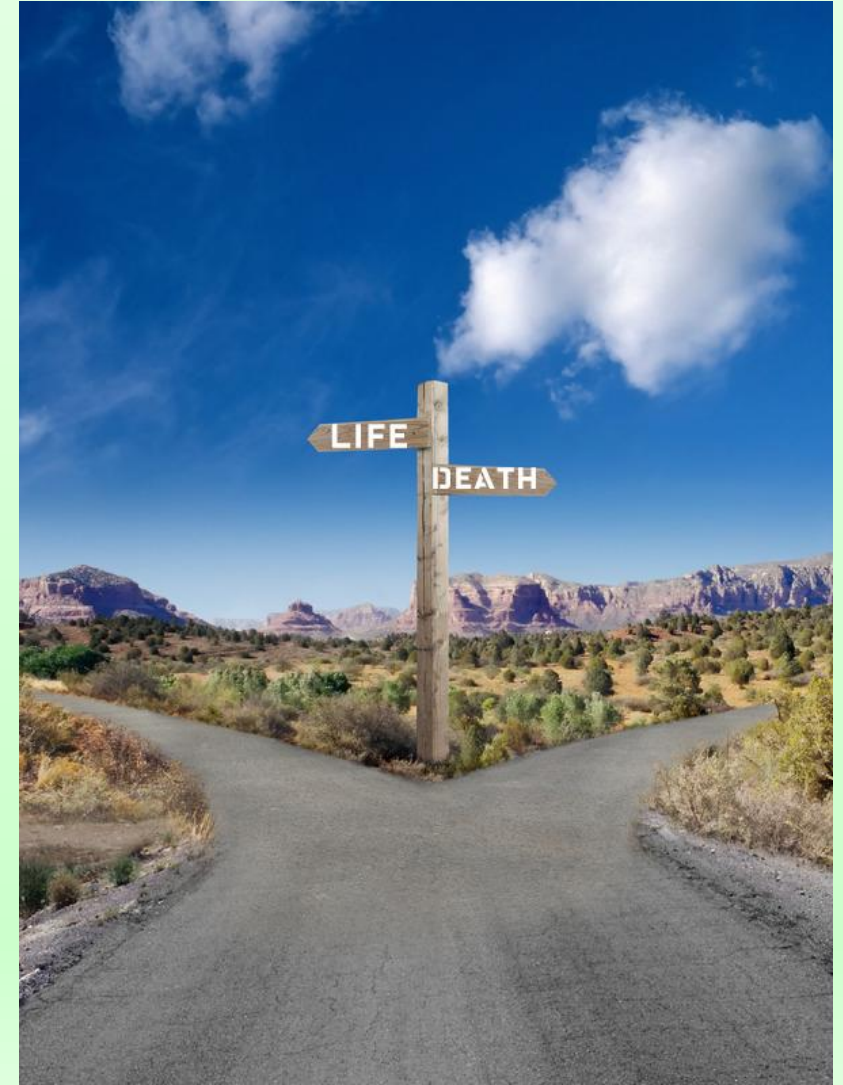


What You Get Is Not What You See

Proverbs 14: 12.



“There is a way
that seems right
to a man, but its
end is the way of
death.”
Proverbs 14: 12.

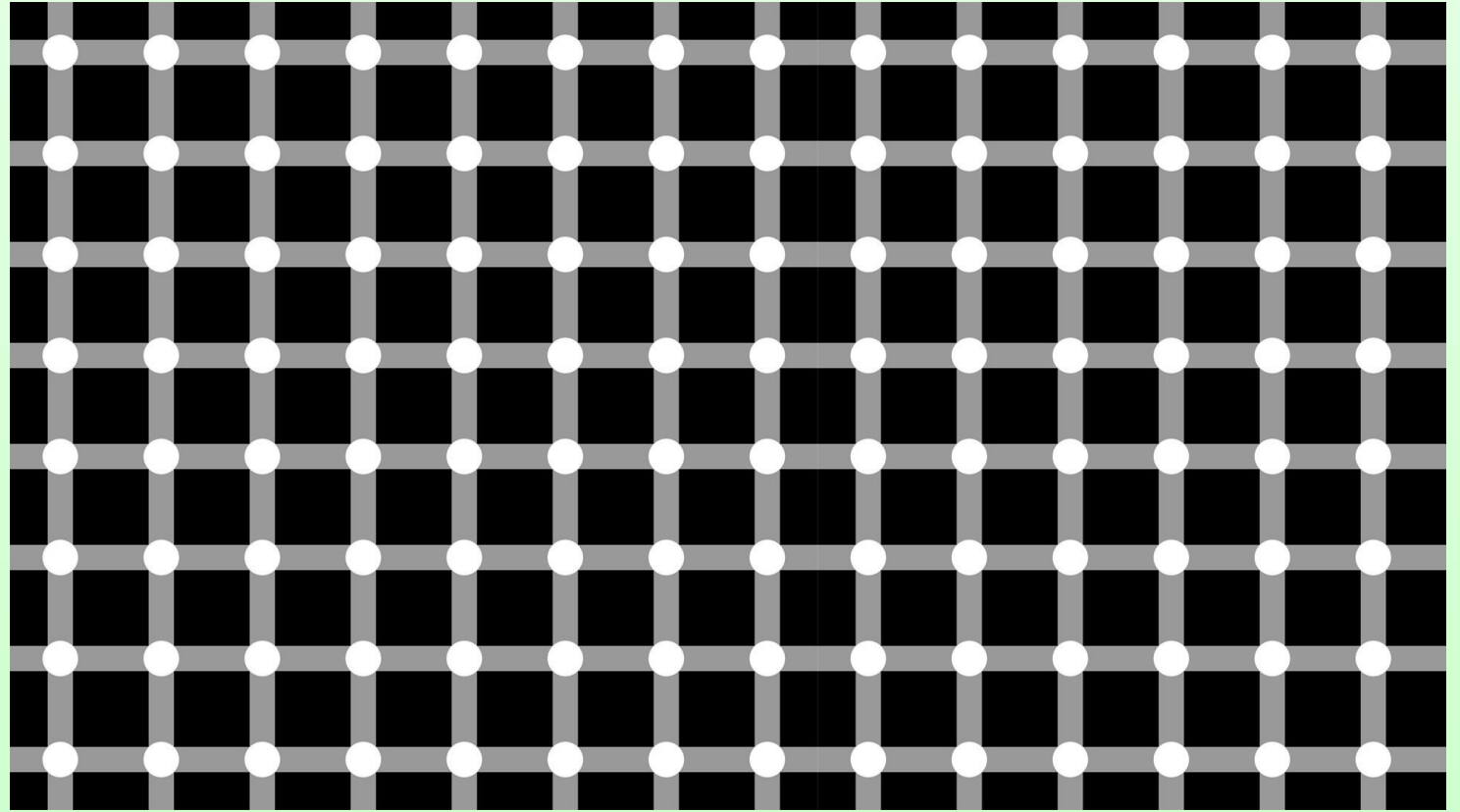


I. Introduction

The importance of making the right choices is fundamental for those who are children of God. The wrong choices create very often an illusion of wisdom, but can lead us to death.



“One day everything will
be well, that is our
hope. Everything's fine
today, that is our
illusion”
Voltaire



“Every person has free choice. Free to obey or disobey the Natural Laws. Your choice determines the consequences. Nobody ever did, or ever will, escape the consequences of his choices.”

Alfred A. Montapert



“Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose.”

Bill Gates



“Each of us should think of the future.
Every puff on a cigarette is another
tick closer to a time bomb of terrible
consequences.”
Ray Comfort

“Probably millions of Americans got up
this morning with a cup of coffee, a
cigarette and a donut. No wonder they
are sick and fouled up.”
Jack LaLanne



“History shows that where ethics and economics come in conflict, victory is always with economics. Vested interests have never been known to have willingly divested themselves unless there was sufficient force to compel them.”

B. R. Ambedkar



“God sees in the present the future events which proceed from free choice. God knows what will happen if you make a particular choice, but does not interfere in the choice made, unless asked for guidance.”
Bethius



"You are free to choose, but you
are not free to alter the
consequences of your decisions."

Ezra Taft Benson



“God always gives His best
to those who leave the
choice with Him.”

Jim Elliot



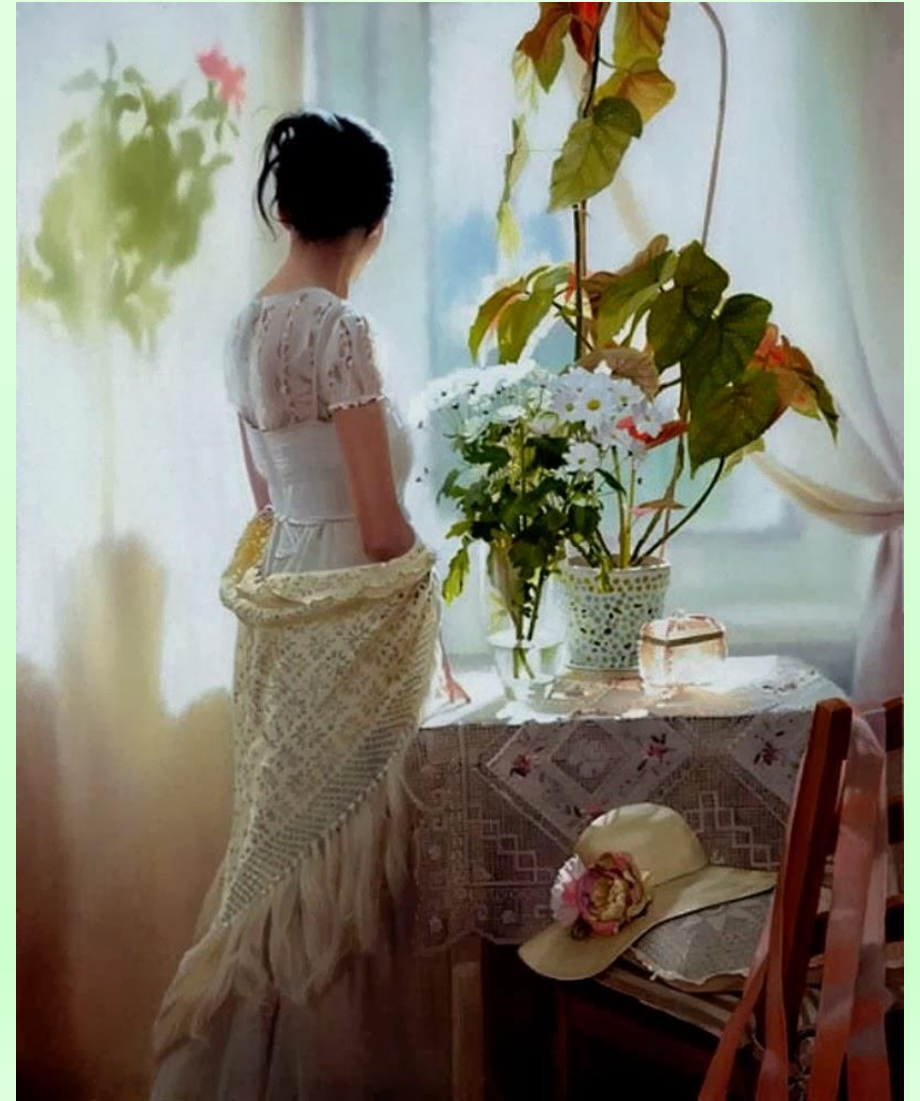
II. Context



Book of Proverbs – Structure

INTRO	1: 1 – 1: 7	The Fear of the Lord for young man: Purpose of the Book, First lesson
1	1: 8 – 9: 18	Wisdom 101 (Introduction to Wisdom)
2	10: 1 – 24: 34	Wise Children (Proverbs for the Youth)
3	25: 1 – 29: 27	Wise People (Proverbs for general public)
4	30: 1 – 30: 33	Wisdom of Agur
5	31: 1 – 31: 9	Wisdom of King Lemuel's Mother
CONCL	31: 10 – 31: 31	Finding the Virtuous Wife with the Fear of the Lord Conclusion of the Book, Last lesson before marriage

The first collection of poems in chapter 14 (1 – 7) starts with the wise woman and concludes with the foolish man. In addition, there is a parallel between the perverse man and the scoffer. The wordplay is obvious in Hebrew: LUWZ for 'perverse' and LUWTS for 'mockers'.



The center of the poem is helping the reader to remember the blessing of God to Jacob, one of the patriarchs who for seven years of his service to Laban, despite of the abusive treatment of his relative, became rich.

There is always a reason for prosperity.

“In this way the man grew exceedingly prosperous and came to own large flocks, and maidservants and menservants, and camels and donkeys.” Genesis 30: 43

The most important reason is God’s action in our favor.



Proverbs 14 is also a reminder of the blessings mentioned at the end of Torah, the 5 books of Moses:

“Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.”
Deuteronomy 28: 4



Proverbs 14: 1 – 7

BLESSING AND PROSPERITY

A	14: 1	Wise Woman
B	14: 2	Perverse Man (LUWZ)
C	14: 3	Mouth of Pride
D	14:4	Blessing and Prosperity
C'	14: 5	Mouth of Lie
B'	14: 6	Mocker (LUWTS)
A'	14: 7	Foolish Man

In the first poem of chapter 14 (1 – 7), the author describes a woman building her house (cf. Psalm 127). In the second poem (v. 8 – 14) the house (BEITH in Hebrew) is the center of all.

The wicked man can apparently be prosperous and have a house, but without blessings. It is possible that the upright man have only a tent. Nevertheless everything that he has or does will be prosperous.



Our verse (14: 12) can be understood as an echo to the verse about the disrespect of those who are fools and don't care to choose the right way of living (14: 9). They don't care about sin. They consider that everything is allowed, having the philosophy of life summarized in the following statement "WHY NOT?"

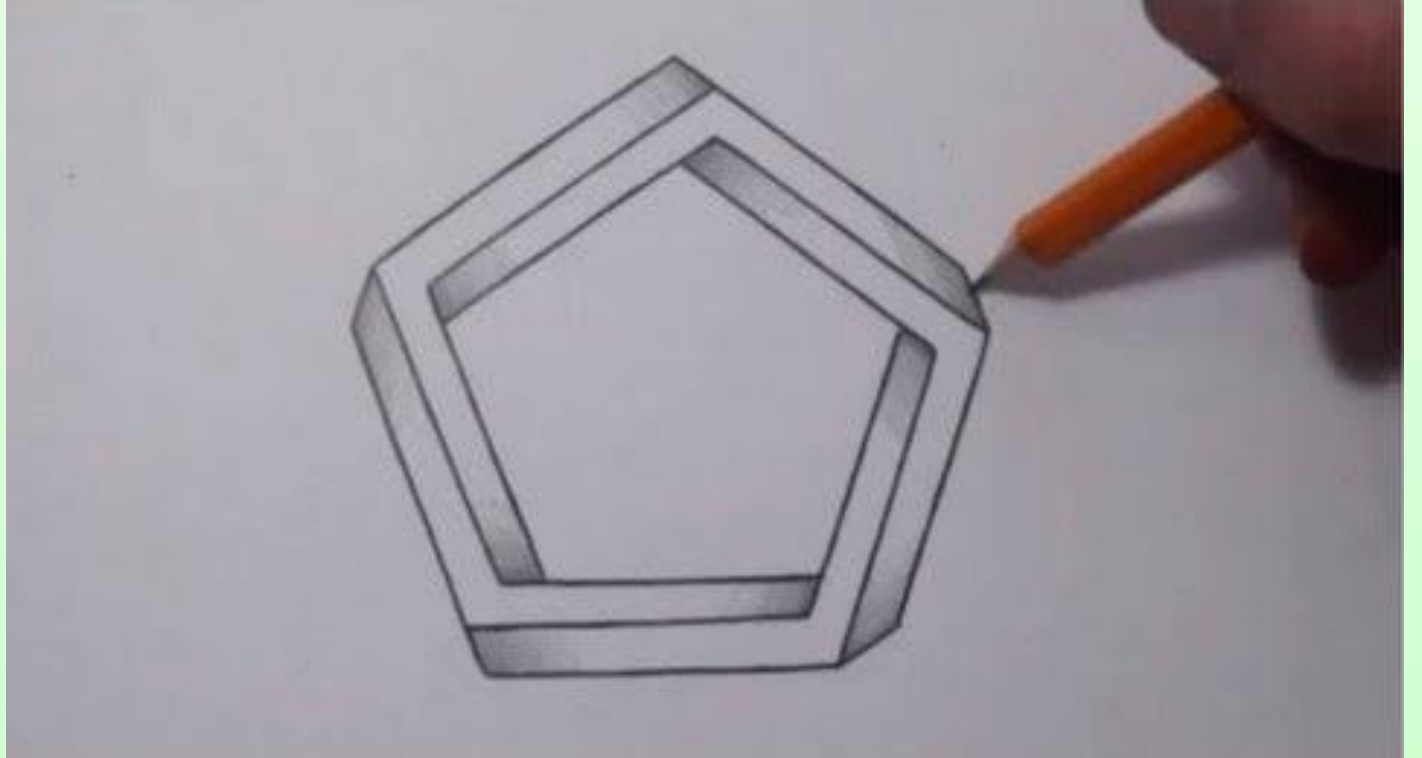


Proverbs 14: 8 – 14

FLOURISHING HOUSES

A	14: 8	The Ways of the prudent man
B	14: 9	Upright Man
C	14: 10	Heart
D	14:11	Flourishing House
B'	14: 12	Upright Way
C'	14: 13	Heart
A'	14: 14	The ways of the backslider

III. Man's
impressions
are not
necessarily
realities



1. The religious experience as a way of life

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”

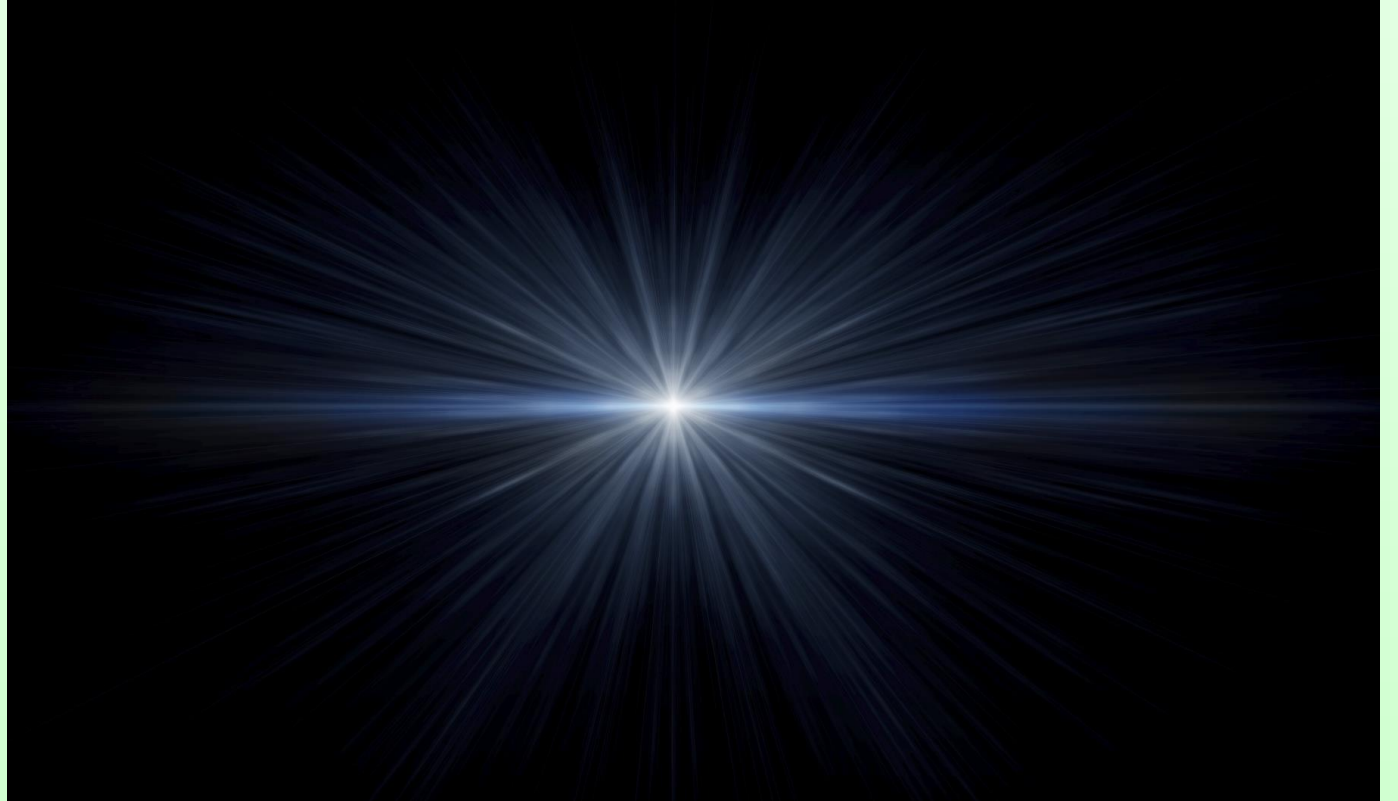
Proverbs 14: 12.

Biblical message:

“I’m the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14: 6.

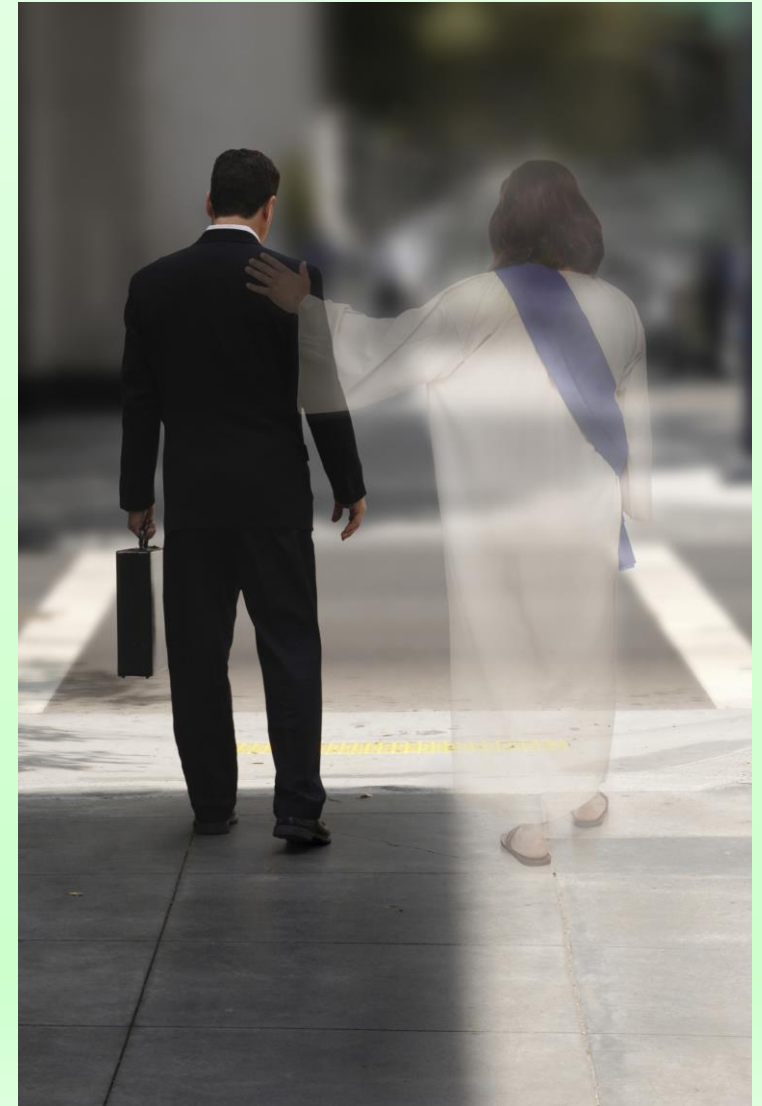


"We are not our
own light."
Nicolas Malebranche



“Men are walking in the light of the sparks of their own kindling. Those who love and fear God will not descend to the world’s level, in choosing the society of the vain and trifling. They will not become charmed with men or women who are not converted. They are to stand up for Jesus, and then Jesus will stand up for them.”

Ellen G. White, 1888 Material,
p. 1332.



“It is normal that different people can have different views, different philosophies, but if a society cannot come to an agreement of what is not negotiable and what represents fundamental values for the protection of all, we are going in the wrong direction. And today those who work with ethics, who search for the best norms and rules acknowledge the lack of references for acceptable and valid decisions. Nobody among contemporary leaders can tell with certitude what is right and what is wrong. As Jacqueline Reiss said very well, “we lost our landmarks.” (Jacqueline Reiss, Ethique contemporaine, Paris: Que sais-je, 1996. 15).”

DS, A Fragmented Vision of Reality, Impact, QC.

“There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes that truth is relative. If this belief is put to the test, one can count on the students' reaction: they will be uncomprehending. That anyone should regard the proposition as not self-evident astonishes them, as though he were calling into question $2 + 2 = 4$, These are things you don't think about.”

Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, Chicago, 1986.

Our knowledge of truth can be relative, but the truth isn't. The truth is Jesus Christ.



There is only one true way leading to eternal, abundant life

“Satan is not simply a metaphor for evil. He is a fallen personal being, working actively today to confuse humanity into believing that there are many avenues to God other than Jesus Christ, who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (Jn. 14:6). To the extent that other philosophies and faiths identify alternative links between God and humanity, they are mistaken. Just as the means of access to God are unique and irreplaceable, so also God’s law is not a mutable metanarrative, subject to change over time and place. It was written by God’s own finger in stone as a permanent, comprehensive moral and spiritual revelation of His loving character to humanity (Ex. 31:18; Deut. 10:1).”

EC Southern University Statement, 2013.

“Those of us who believe in God and derive our sense of right and wrong and ethics from God's Word really have no difficulty whatsoever defining where our ethics come from. People who believe in survival of the fittest might have more difficulty deriving where their ethics come from. A lot of evolutionists are very ethical people.”

Benjamin Carson

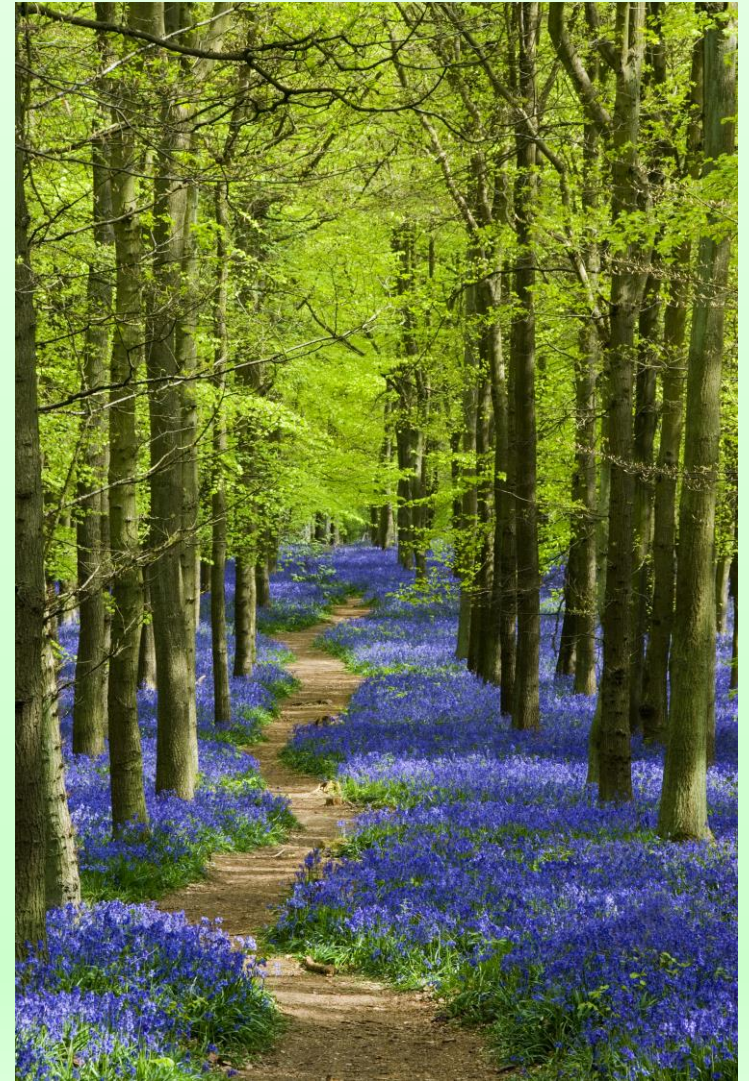


2. Illusions are dangerous. Man cannot be sure that his choices are wise, without God's intervention

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."
Proverbs 14: 12.

Biblical Message

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting."
Psalm 139: 23. 24.



“Illusion is needed to disguise the emptiness within.”

Arthur Erickson



“Life has no meaning the
moment you lose the illusion
of being eternal.”
Jean-Paul Sartre



“I like coffee because it gives
me the illusion that I might
be awake.”
Lewis Black



“He who holds the truth in unrighteousness, who declares his belief in it, and yet wounds it every day by his inconsistent life, is surrendering himself to the service of Satan and leading souls to ruin. This class hold intercourse with fallen angels and are aided by them in gaining the control of minds. When Satan’s bewitching power controls a person, God is forgotten, and man who is filled with corrupt purposes is extolled... The mind is so deluded that it cannot reason intelligently, and an illusion is continually leading it from purity. The spiritual eyesight becomes blurred, and persons of hitherto untainted morals become confused under the delusive sophistry of those agents of Satan who profess to be messengers of light.” Ellen G. White, 5T p. 142.

3. The end of the road determines its value

“There is a way that seems right
to a man, but its end is the way
of death.”

Proverbs 14: 12.

Biblical Message

“Yet I still belong to you;
You hold my right hand.
You guide me with your counsel,
Leading me to a glorious
destiny.”

Psalms 73: 23. 24. (NLT)



God's child will
always fix his eyes at
the end of his road.
Failing to focus on
the ultimate realities
is threatening.

"Obstacles are things
a person sees when
he takes his eyes off
his goal."
E. Joseph Cossman



“If you don't
know where
you are
going,
you'll end up
someplace
else.”
Yogi Berra



“If a man knows not
to which port he sails,
no wind is favorable.”
Seneca



“It's not hard to decide what you want your life to be about. What's hard, she said, is figuring out what you're willing to give up in order to do the things you really care about.”

Shauna Niequist



4. The death is unavoidable for all human beings, unless they find Jesus, who was victorious over death

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”
Proverbs 14: 12.

Biblical Message

“He will swallow up death forever,
And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces;
The rebuke of His people
He will take away from all the earth;
For the LORD has spoken.”
Isaiah 25: 8..



People today are aware of the fact that life is short. As the great majority of them want to enjoy every moment of their life (hedonism), before it is too late, the tendency is to diminish the impact of the end of the road, as several famous thinkers affirmed more than 2000 years ago:

“Death doesn’t concern us, because as long as we exist, death is not here. And when it does come, we no longer exist.”
Epicurus



A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump.

"Reverend," said the young man, "I'm so sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip."

The minister chuckled, "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business."



V. Conclusion



“If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call, you come wearing the yoke of Christ, — the yoke of obedience and service, — all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved.”

Ellen G. White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 101 (1896).



“In deciding upon any course of action we are not to ask whether we can see that harm will result from it, but whether it is in keeping with the will of God. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 14:12.



Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 634.

What You Get Is Not What You See

Proverbs 14: 12.

