

## The Fool's Guide to Righteousness

### *A Reflection on Wisdom 2:1, 12-22*

Wisdom 2:12 sets the stage with the wicked plotting against the just man:

**“Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions.”**

The righteous man's crime? Simply *being righteous*. The mere existence of holiness is enough to ruffle feathers. This is why **St. Augustine** points out that the wicked hate the righteous not for their deeds but for their mere *being*. It's like being furious at an apple tree for producing apples!

### **The Heart of the Conflict: Contradiction Without Compromise**

The wicked say:

**“He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord.”** (Wisdom 2:13)

The issue here isn't just moral disapproval—it's personal. It's the discomfort of someone shining a light when you're trying to enjoy the darkness. **St. Jerome** aptly noted that the righteous man's life becomes a living contradiction to the values of the wicked.

For us, this plays out practically in a secular society that increasingly views moral truth as subjective. When we proclaim God's truth, we're inevitably seen as inconvenient, *judgmental*, or simply *outdated*. But remember: the light doesn't condemn the darkness; it simply reveals it.

### **The Foolishness of Trying to Eliminate Righteousness**

The villains in this passage think they've come up with a brilliant idea:

**“Let us test him with insult and torture... let us condemn him to a shameful death.”** (Wisdom 2:19-20)

Their logic? If we destroy him, we destroy the truth he represents. It's the age-old tactic of cancel culture but with more bloodshed.

But here's the punchline: **St. John Chrysostom** points out that this plan is about as effective as trying to eliminate Gregorian chant by turning up bad pop music. The persecution of the righteous doesn't end their witness—it amplifies it.

What happens when they try to eliminate the truth? **Christ's crucifixion and resurrection**. The very act meant to silence Him becomes the defining moment of victory.

### **The Practical Lesson: What To Do When Righteousness Gets Mocked**

The irony here is rich. They say, “Let’s get rid of Him.” And God says, “Great idea—watch how I turn this around.” As **St. Thomas Aquinas** noted, their wickedness only fulfills prophecy. It’s like the classic villain move of revealing their plan aloud—only to realize the microphone was on.

### **So what’s the practical takeaway for us?**

1. **Expect Mockery:** As Catholics, we will face ridicule for standing firm in truth. Even Christ warned us of this (John 15:18-20).
2. **Respond With Joy, Not Anger:** The saints teach us to wear mockery as a badge of honor. **St. Teresa of Avila** quipped, *“If this is how You treat Your friends, no wonder You have so few!”* Humor itself can be a tool of sanctity.
3. **Don’t Hide the Light:** If righteousness is inconvenient to the world, it’s doing its job. Boldly live out your faith, regardless of the mockery. Truth is not compromised by ridicule—it’s purified.
4. **Lean Into Christ’s Victory:** Persecution only strengthens the faithful. The Resurrection is the ultimate proof that truth will always rise above error.

### **The Joke’s on Them**

The wicked thought their plot was genius. They imagined they could silence the truth by silencing the righteous. But the comedy of their failure is that the more they tried to suppress the light, the brighter it shone.

The joke’s on them. And as Christians, we can respond with joyful confidence. As **G.K. Chesterton** put it, *“Angels can fly because they take themselves lightly.”* So, let’s face the world’s mockery not with bitterness, but with the joy of knowing that God always has the last laugh.