

# *Welcome To Sunday Night Bible Fellowship*

*Every word inspired.*



*Every word proclaimed.*

***“We proclaim Him, warning every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man mature in Christ.” Col 1:28***

***“Taste Buds & Can Openers”***

***Eccl. 6:1-12***

June 14, 2020

## **Ecc1 6**

- 1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun and it is prevalent among men —
- 2 a man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires; yet God has not empowered him to eat from them, for a foreigner enjoys them. This is vanity and a severe affliction.
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# ***How much does God control man's enjoyment?***

1. Wealth (1,2)
2. Children (3-5)
3. Long life (6)
4. Appetite (7)
5. Wisdom (8)
6. Desires (9)
7. Knowledge (10-12)

**1** *There is an evil which I have seen under the sun and it is prevalent among men —*  
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### **1. Wealth.**

“evil” - רע - ra – affliction, distress

“prevalent” - רב - rab – weighty, burdensome.

### **God gives 2 things:**

1. Riches, wealth, honor.

- This is not done equally, but to accomplish God’s purposes.
- It really doesn’t matter, because money is not the source of happiness – God is. You can be lower class, or middle class, and enjoy life as much as the upper class.

### **Luke 12:15**

15 "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

- That is because God is equally available to everyone who calls upon Him.
- Whatever lot He has determined for you in terms of wealth, is good and acceptable and does not determine your happiness.
- Tragically the people most often envied are frequently the most miserable people on the face of the earth.

***“yet God has not empowered him to eat from them,”***

2. The ability to enjoy his riches, wealth, and honor.

**“empowered”** - שָׁלַט - shalat – permit, to give power.

- The ability to enjoy what one has is not automatic because enjoyment is not something built into money and possessions. That’s the misconception.
- Enjoyment, with what you have been given from God, must also be given as a gift from God.
- God gave this person riches but wouldn’t let him enjoy the riches. God gave him an honored place in society but He would not let him enjoy the honored place in society.
- Here’s a person with all the “toys,” but none of the “joys.”
- Why does God withhold enjoyment? Because man does not give thanks to God for what he has.

## **Rom 1:21**

21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks,

- Man becomes dysfunctional – enjoyment becomes enslavement & idolatry (**perverted** enjoyment).
- Therefore the mark of a believer is one who gives abundant thanks to God for what he has been given.
- When a believer humbles himself by being thankful and appreciative to God, then that releases God to give him **pure** enjoyment of what He has given him.
- We are acknowledging that we didn’t deserve it nor did it come to us because of our human ability. We have it because of God.



***“yet God has not empowered him to eat from them, for a foreigner enjoys them. This is vanity and a severe affliction.”***

- So God appoints someone else to receive enjoyment from his wealth.

**“foreigner”** - נִכְרִי - nokriy – alien, stranger.

- This is not a relative or a friend.
- It doesn't tell us how this “alien” obtained the riches from this individual. Could be bankruptcy, bad investments, whatever. You work and work and accumulate riches and get no enjoyment, but rather that enjoyment is gifted to a total stranger. This is the ultimate pain.
- Solomon says the life of this man is meaningless and is afflicted with a great disease. He leads a miserable life.
- Question: Do we measure satisfaction by what we may stack up, or by what we are given to enjoy?

## **Ecc1 5:18,19**

18 Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward.

19 Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.

# **1 Tim 6:17-19**

17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,

19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.









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## **2. Children.**

- Family, children, grandchildren, as great a blessing as these can be, are not the source of satisfaction. Similarly, many of us want to live long and prosperous lives.
- If you can't enjoy life/riches and no one grieves when you die (unnoticed, unlamented, and unfulfilled), what does that say about your life? You'd be better off never to have been born.
- It is more tragic for life to be granted and a person not to enjoy the good things in life than it is for the miscarriage of a baby.
- Solomon is not minimizing the pain of a miscarriage.
- Solomon is saying the baby did not have to live a long life of misery. It comes in futility and goes into obscurity, it's forgotten.
- The Jews never named a miscarried child, instead they waited to name the child until the 8th day. That way it was easier to forget the miscarriage. So this child had no name and so it goes into obscurity.
- It also never saw the sun and never knew any of the evil and misery of this world.

“To die unburied was the mark of a despised and unmourned end. Better to miscarry at birth than to miscarry throughout life.”

- Michael Eaton

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**6 *"Even if the other man lives a thousand years twice and does not enjoy good things — do not all go to one place?"***

### **3. Long life.**

- For 2,000 years he does not enjoy the things God has given him.
- He goes to the same place that the miscarried child goes.
- The miscarried child has it better because he never had to go through 2,000 years of misery.
- Sheol = the grave.
- You could live twice as long as anyone else and have more children than anyone else, but if you are not thankful to God and enjoying what He has given you, it is all meaningless.



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***7 All a man's labor is for his mouth and yet the appetite is not satisfied.***

#### **4. Appetite.**

- Whether you're CEO of Microsoft or you're working part-time at McDonald's, you are in reality working for food. You are working for your next meal.
- It doesn't matter how much you ate yesterday, tomorrow you will be hungry again.
- A man works and works to buy food, but it's never enough.
- He has to keep working because he continually gets hungry and needs to eat.

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## **5. Wisdom.**

- You may be wise in your investments, careful with your money, make wise decisions in life, but if there is no enjoyment, you are no better than a fool.
- A poor man who learns how to attract others to himself by means of his personality ("knowing how to walk before the living") is still left empty, lonely and miserable inside.
- Therefore regardless of who you are (wise or poor) there is no ultimate satisfaction in this life unless you enjoy it.

## **Luke 12:16-21**

16 And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive.

17 "And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'

18 "Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

19 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'"

20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'

21 "So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

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## **6. Desires.**

- Better to be content and enjoy what you have than to waste your life desiring what you do not have.
- Dreaming about something does not bring it to pass or bring it into one's possession. It is like chasing the wind.



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## **7. Knowledge.**

- Verse 10 is a strong statement on the sovereignty of God.
- God has sovereignly decreed the nature and essence of everything that exists. Consequently it is foolish for man to argue with God about what He has foreordained.
- On a personal level, your lot in life is determined beforehand by God. He is the one who established your circumstances. You have to decide how you will respond to those circumstances.
- You can enjoy life if you accept your lot in life and give thanks to Him.
- You have no right to charge God with causing your life to be the way it is.
- It is futile to argue with God. (Job 38-42: Rom. 9:19-21)

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- Don't waste your breath!
- All the words in the world are not going to change God's predetermined plan for you.
- You can stand there all day long and argue with God about why He made your life like this and why this was in your life and why this was not in your life. Rather just accept it and give thanks.
- You are not going to know what's up ahead. He wants you to just live by faith. He wants you to trust Him.
- "You know what the quickest way out of a trial is? Giving thanks to God."

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- In the course of a life, which is better: Wealth or poverty? Health or sickness? Fame or obscurity?

***Look at Joseph:***

- Do you think Joseph thought it was good that his brothers sold him into slavery?
- Do you think Joseph thought it was good when he was thrown in prison for two years for no cause?
- So you don't know what ultimate good God wants to bring about out of your life during your lifetime.
- Man does not know what is best for him or what his future holds.
- A high school boy once prayed, "Lord, if I could just go with that beautiful girl I'd be the happiest boy alive." Then he got acquainted with her. They went out a few times together, and he found myself praying, "Lord, if I could just get rid of this girl I'd be the happiest guy alive!"

“There are two tragedies in life: one is not to get your heart’s desire. The other is to get it.”

- George Bernard Shaw



- If prosperity is not always good, as Solomon has showed us, then it is equally true that adversity is not always bad.
- If you know Christ as Savior: You are incredibly rich.
- If you don't have Christ: You are incredibly poor.
- “If you have no money you are poor, if all you have is money you are even more poor.”
- Man is just passing through his life like a shadow - unstable and insecure - so he cannot know with any certainty what is the right action for him to take in any given situation.
- To man living “under the sun” without God, he does not have a clue what the future holds and what therefore is best for him in the present.
- Happiness and enjoyment in life is found in the Lord Jesus who said:

## **Matt 5:3-11**

- 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- 5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
- 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
- 10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.