



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Worship Music

[Isn't He-Terry Clark](#)

[God Your So Good-Terry Clark](#)

[Only Believe-Terry Clark](#)

Prayer

Lord, today I want to be used by You to encourage someone. I ask You to lead me to those You want me to encourage. Show me what to say, how much to say, and when to say it. Teach me to recognize the needs in other people and not to focus only on my own needs, in Jesus' name. Amen...

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

[KLOVE](#)

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Bible Study Sites

[Chuck Smith Through The Bible](#)

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Pastor Chuck Smith

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Ecclesiastes 4:1-16 (AMP)

1 THEN I returned and considered all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun: And I beheld the tears of the oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors was power, but they [too] had no comforter. 2 So I praised and thought more fortunate those who have been long dead than the living, who are still alive. 3 But better than them both [I thought] is he who has not yet been born, who has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun. 4 Then I saw that all painful effort in labor and all skill in work comes from man's rivalry with his neighbor. This is also vanity, a vain striving after the wind and a feeding on it. 5 The fool folds his hands together and eats his own flesh [destroying himself by indolence]. 6 Better is a handful with quietness than both hands full with painful effort, a vain striving after the wind and a feeding on it. 7 Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun [in one of its peculiar forms]. 8 Here is one alone—no one with him; he neither has child nor brother. Yet there is no end to all his labor, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, neither does he ask, For whom do I labor and deprive myself of good? This is also vanity (emptiness, falsity, and futility); yes, it is a painful effort and an unhappy business. 9 Two are better than one, because they have a good [more satisfying] reward for their labor; 10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! 11 Again, if two lie down together, then they have warmth; but how can one be warm alone? 12 And though a man might prevail against him who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken. 13 Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to receive counsel (friendly reproof and warning)— 14 Even though [the youth] comes out of prison to reign, while the other, born a king, becomes needy. 15 I saw all the living who walk under the sun with the youth who was to stand up in the king's stead. 16 There was no end to all the people; he was over all of them. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity (emptiness, falsity, vainglory) and a striving after the wind and a feeding on it.

Chapter 4

So I returned, and I considered all of the oppressions that are done under the sun: and the tears of those that are oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter (Ecc 4:1).

The philosophy, Might is right.

Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which were yet alive (Ecc 4:2).

I looked at life and, man, you're better off dead than you are alive. Those that have already died, oh, they've got it made. You still alive, you got the headaches.

Yea, better is he both they, which have not been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun. Again, I considered all of the travail, and every right work, and for this man is envied of his neighbor. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit. The fool folds his hands together, and eats his own flesh. Better is a handful with quietness, than both of your hands full with travail and vexation of spirit (Ecc 4:3-6).

There is a scripture says, "A little that a righteous man has is more than the riches of many wicked" (Psalm 37:16). Now you're better off with just a little and the Lord, the comfort, than having both hands full and being frustrated.

Then I returned, and I saw the vanity [or the emptiness] under the sun. There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet there is no end of his labor (Ecc 4:7-8); Even the man who doesn't have any children, he can't settle down and just enjoy what he has. He's got to keep on it. Keep laboring. No matter how rich he is, he can't be satisfied. He can't relax and enjoy it. Here's one man alone, he has no child, no brother, no one to inherit his wealth. And yet, he can't get away from the grindstone. There's no end of all of his labor.

neither is his eye satisfied with his riches; neither says he (Ecc 4:8), He doesn't consider, "What am I saving all this money for? Who am I saving it for? Why am I saving it? Who am I going to leave it to when I die?" And yet, he's bound to it. He's digging for more and more and more. Striving, struggling. Can't stop working. Pushing, grinding, in order to gain more and yet he doesn't have anybody to leave it to.

This also is vanity, it's a sore travail. Two are better than one; because [at least] they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falls; for there's no one to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they can have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevails against him, two will be able to withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken. Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king (Ecc 4:8-13),

Look to those little kids. They're better off than I am. Poor wise child than this old foolish king. who will no more be admonished (Ecc 4:13). I won't listen to anything anymore. No one can tell me anything.

For out of prison he comes to reign; whereas also he that is born of his kingdom becomes poor. I consider all of the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead. And there is no end of all of the people, even of all that have been before them: and of all that shall come after they shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit (Ecc 4:14-16).

It seems that life just goes on. There's, you know, multitudes before me. There's going to be multitudes after me. I'm just in the line here, but it's all so empty.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-20 (AMP)

1 KEEP YOUR foot [give your mind to what you are doing] when you go [as Jacob to sacred Bethel] to the house of God. For to draw near to hear and obey is better than to give the sacrifice of fools [carelessly, irreverently] too ignorant to know that they are doing evil. **2** Be not rash with your mouth, and let not your heart be hasty to utter a word before God. For God is in heaven, and you are on earth; therefore let your words be few. **3** For a dream comes with much business and painful effort, and a fool's voice with many words. **4** When you vow a vow or make a pledge to God, do not put off paying it; for God has no pleasure in fools (those who witlessly mock Him). Pay what you vow. **5** It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. **6** Do not allow your mouth to cause your body to sin, and do not say before the messenger [the priest] that it was an error or mistake. Why should God be [made] angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? **7** For in a multitude of dreams there is futility and worthlessness, and ruin in a flood of words. But [reverently] fear God [revere and worship Him, knowing that He is]. **8** If you see the oppression of the poor and the violent taking away of justice and righteousness in the state or province, do not marvel at the matter. [Be sure that there are those who will attend to it] for a higher [official] than the high is observing, and higher ones are over them. **9** Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all; the king himself is served by the field and in all, a king is an advantage to a land with cultivated fields. **10** He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, nor he who loves abundance with gain. This also is vanity (emptiness, falsity, and futility)! **11** When goods increase, they who eat them increase also. And what gain is there to their owner except to see them with his eyes? **12** The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the fullness of the rich will not let him sleep. **13** There is a serious and severe evil which I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt. **14** But those riches are lost in a bad venture; and he becomes the father of a son, and there is nothing in his hand [with which to support the child]. **15** As [the man] came forth from his mother's womb, so he will go again, naked as he came; and he will take away nothing for all his labor which he can carry in his hand. **16** And this also is a serious and severe evil—that in all points as he came, so shall he go; and what gain has he who labors for the wind? **17** All his days also he eats in darkness [cheerlessly, with no sweetness and light in them], and much sorrow and sickness and wrath are his. **18** Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is for one to eat and drink, and to find enjoyment in all the labor in which he labors under the sun all the days which God gives him—for this is his [allotted] part. **19** Also, every man to whom God has given riches and possessions, and the power to enjoy them and to accept his appointed lot and to rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God [to him]. **20** For he shall not much remember [seriously] the days of his life, because God [Himself] answers and corresponds to the joy of his heart [the tranquillity of God is mirrored in him].

Chapter 5

Keep your foot when you go to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they do not consider the evil that they do (Ecc 5:1).

When you go into the house of God, listen. Be more ready to hear.

Don't be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and you are upon the earth: therefore let your words be few (Ecc 5:2).

And now he's talking about going in the house of God and making all kinds of promises and vows to God. "Oh, God, I'm going to serve You. Oh, God, I'm going to put you first in my life. Oh, God," and making all these promises. He said, "Keep your mouth shut. Don't do a lot of talking. Listen. For God is there. He's in heaven. He hears what you're saying. So don't be hasty to utter anything."

For a dream comes through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by the multitude of his words. Now when you vow a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he has no pleasure in fools: pay what you have vowed. It is better that you should not vow, than that you should vow and not pay. Don't allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin (Ecc 5:3-6);

All of the broken promises that we have made to God because we didn't have enough sense to just listen and keep our mouth shut when we came into the house of God. And so we make these rash promises. These vows before the Lord. And then we break them. Better not to vow. You see, the vow always makes me feel better. Because I get sort of satisfied, I promised God I'm going to give Him everything, you know. All I have belongs to God. God, you can have it all. And I feel relieved of my guilt of amassing things, because after all, it all belongs to God. I gave it to Him. Now He never has a chance to use it. But when I die, who is it going to go to? "Suffer not your mouth to cause your flesh to sin."

neither say you before the angel, that it was an error (Ecc 5:6):

Oh, I didn't really mean that.

wherefore why should God become angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of your hands? For in the multitude of dreams and in many words there is also divers vanities: but reverence God (Ecc 5:6-7).

Respect Him.

For if you see the oppression of the poor, and the violent perverting of judgment and the justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regards; and there be higher than they (Ecc 5:8).

God is higher than man. If you see these things, just know that there is one who is higher.

Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: and the king himself is served by the field. Now he that loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loves abundance with increase: this also is vanity (Ecc 5:9-10).

Jesus said a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesses. If you love silver, you'll never be satisfied. If you love abundance, you'll never be satisfied by the abundance.

When goods increase, they are increased that eat them (Ecc 5:11):

So Solomon had more goods, but he had more people eating them.

and what good is it to the owners thereof, except that you get to watch them eat? (Ecc 5:11)

I mean, I've got all of these goods, but it takes so many servants to keep all of these cattle. Takes so many shepherds to watch over all these. I got to feed them all. So I've got all these, but what good is it? You get to watch everybody eat it up, you know. All my wives and all my kids sitting there eating, and all the servants, all eating, so. So you have a lot, so what? You know. What good is it to you? You can only eat so much. You can only sleep in one bed. I mean, you know, you can only take care of your own needs, and after that, whatever you have, you just watch others eat it up.

The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much: but the abundance of the rich won't allow him to sleep (Ecc 5:12).

The guy is out there laboring hard, he really sleeps sound. But yet this guy has so many riches he's lying there in the pillow, "Now tomorrow I better take the stock out of that one, looks like it's going down. Better invest in this, oh, I wonder, would that be wise?" And all night long he's mulling over what he's going to be doing tomorrow to get more riches. And the abundance of his possessions won't allow him to sleep. He lies there pounding the pillow all night. Figuring out. So how sweet is the sleep of the laboring man.

There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, there is nothing in his hand. And as he came forth out of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, he shall take nothing of his labor, which he may carry away in his hand (Ecc 5:13-15).

Man, when you die, you're not going to take anything with you. You're going to leave it all.

And this also is a sore evil, in all the points as he came, so he's going to go: so what profit has he of all that which he labored for to the wind? For all of the days he eats in darkness, and he has much sorrow and wrath in his sickness. Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all of his labor that he has taken under the sun all of the days of his life, which God gives him: for it is his portion (Ecc 5:16-18).

In other words, enjoy it now, because, man, that's your portion. That's it. Now, how different this is than what Jesus said concerning our riches. He said, "Lay not up for yourself treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and decay, thieves break through and steal. Lay up for yourself treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:19-20). There is a way by which you can transfer your treasures into eternal treasures. And Jesus encourages us towards that. You can exchange your currency for that which is current in heaven.

Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answers him in the joy of his heart (Ecc 5:19-20).



Ecclesiastes 6:1-12 (AMP)

1 THERE IS an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavily upon men: 2 A man to whom God has given riches, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing for his soul of all that he might desire, yet God does not give him the power or capacity to enjoy them [things which are gifts from God], but a stranger [in whom he has no interest succeeds him and] consumes and enjoys them. This is vanity (emptiness, falsity, and futility); it is a sore affliction! 3 If a man begets a hundred children and lives many years so that the days of his years are many, but his life is not filled with good, and also he is given no burial [honors nor is laid to rest in the sepulcher of his fathers], I say that [he who had] an untimely birth [resulting in death] is better off than he, 4 For [the untimely one] comes in futility and goes into darkness, and in darkness his name is covered. 5 Moreover, he has not seen the sun nor had any knowledge, yet he [the stillborn child] has rest rather than he [who is aware of all that he has missed and all that he would not have had to suffer]. 6 Even though he lives a thousand years twice over and yet has seen no good and experienced no enjoyment—do not all go to one place [the place of the dead]? 7 All the labor of man is for his mouth [for self-preservation and enjoyment], and yet his desire is not satisfied. 8 For what advantage has the wise man over the fool [being worldly-wise is not the secret to happiness]? What advantage has the poor man who has learned how to walk before the living [publicly, with men's eyes upon him; being poor is not the secret to happiness either]? 9 Better is the sight of the eyes [the enjoyment of what is available to one] than the cravings of wandering desire. This is also vanity (emptiness, falsity, and futility) and a striving after the wind and a feeding on it! 10 Whatever [man] is, he has been named that long ago, and it is known that it is man [Adam]; nor can he contend with Him who is mightier than he [whether God or death]. 11 Seeing that there are [all these and] many other things and words that increase the emptiness, falsity, vainglory, and futility [of living], what profit and what outcome is there for man? 12 For who [limited to human wisdom] knows what is good for man in his life, all the days of his vain life which he spends as a shadow [going through the motions but accomplishing nothing]? For who can tell a man what will happen [to his work, his treasure, his plans] under the sun after he is gone?

Chapter 6

Now there is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it's common among men: A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wants nothing for his soul of all that he desires (Ecc 6:1-2), The guy doesn't want anything for his soul. Everything he desires he has. yet God gives him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eats it: this is vanity, and an evil disease (Ecc 6:2). The guy who has everything but can't partake of it. If a man begets a hundred children, and he lives many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he has no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he (Ecc 6:3). The guy is better off if he was, if he was really aborted, rather than to live and have a hundred children and to live a long life. For he comes in with vanity, and he departs in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than the other. Even though he lives to be a thousand years twice [or two thousand years old], yet he has seen no good: do not all go to one place? All of the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet his appetite is not filled (Ecc 6:4-7). All you do, all your labor just to feed yourself, but yet you're always hungry. All of the labor of a man for his mouth, yet he's not full. For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living? Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this also though is vanity and vexation of spirit. That which hath been is named already (Ecc 6:8-10),

Nothing new.

and it is known that it is man: now neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he (Ecc 6:10).

Yet we find so many men seeking to contend with God. The prophet said, "Woe unto him who strives with his Maker!" (Isaiah 45:9) And yet people are striving with God. Our striving with God usually results from a tragic experience in life where we do not understand why God allowed a certain tragedy or grief to befall our lives. And because I cannot understand why God allowed this to happen, I become bitter against God. There are a lot of people today who are fighting with God. They're angry with God. They're bitter against God. It's because their lives have not worked out to their desire. It's because God hasn't given to them all that they want or all that they feel. Or that God has allowed something to happen to them which seems to be tragic. Now somehow I think that God should only allow good things to happen to me. Somehow I feel that God ought to keep me healthy all the time. Never sick. I believe that God ought to make me a very prosperous person. I believe that God ought to make me very beautiful. And if I am flawed in any of these areas, then I blame God. "God, why did You make me so ugly? God, why did You allow this to happen to me? God, why?" And I am blaming God and finding fault with God because He hasn't followed what I feel to be the ideal pattern for my life. So a man contends with God.

But, verse 12:

Who really knows what is good for man in this life (Ecc 6:12),

Who really knows whether it's better that you be rich or poor? You really know what's best for you? Now you think it would be best for you to be rich. But is that so? If you are rich, will that take your heart and mind away from God? Will it cause you to trust in your riches? Will it diminish your trust in Him and your love for Him? Will you be drawn away by the divers lusts that they that are rich fall into? Will your heart be turned from God to your possessions? Who knows? Do you know what riches would do for you? And yet you're striving with God. You're contending with God because you're not rich. Because you have these financial woes. But God may know. I don't know. Maybe God has to keep me poor so that I'll continue to trust in Him. I'll continue to rely upon Him day by day for my provisions. Who knows what is good for man? Is it better for me that I be healthy or I be sick? Evidently for Paul the apostle it was better that he be sick. When he asked God to remove his infirmity, God said, "Hey, Paul, My grace is sufficient for you. My strength will be made perfect in your weakness." So Paul said, "I glory in my weakness, that the power of God might be revealed in me" (II Corinthians 12:9). Is it better for me that I be weak so that I have to trust in God; that I don't have the reliance in myself, but I've learned to just trust in God completely, and thus I know the strength of God? Or is it better that I feel strong and self-sufficient and then get wiped out because I'm really very weak when it comes to my flesh and things of my flesh? What is better for me? Who really knows? I don't know my own heart. It's deceitful and desperately wicked. God knows. God knows what is best for me. That is why it is so wrong for me to contend with God when He doesn't do for me what I think He ought to be doing. When He doesn't give to me those things that I feel I need and desire. And so I begin to contend with God, because, "God, You know how I desire a little Porsche. It's not fair, God, that You don't give it to me. Oh, I think that would be so good for me." And God knows that it would wipe me out. It would swell me up in pride. It would make me think that I was really something. That goes cornering and everything else, to show and probably get in a fatal accident trying to show off in the thing, you know. And God knows what's best for me. "But I would desire this, God," and oh, I'm angry with God. I'm contending with God because He doesn't do for me the little goodies that I want Him to do.

But He knows what's best for me. I don't. I don't. Who knows what is good for man in this life? all the days of his vain life which he spends as a shadow? (Ecc 6:12) Life is short. Days measured by days. Life apart from Christ is empty. Life apart from Christ lacks real meaning or substance. It's a shadow. All of the days of his vain shadow. and who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun? (Ecc 6:12) Who knows what's going to be after you? Who knows what's going to follow? Who knows what tomorrow is going to bring? Who knows what the future holds? Who knows what the result of it is going to be in your life? Only God knows. Therefore, rather than contending with God I need to submit myself to God who knows all things. And rather than fighting and contending because He's not doing things my way, I need to just submit and yield my life into His hand, into His wisdom, for He knows what is best for me. And even the sorrow or the tragedy that I might be experiencing today God is using for my good. Even the sickness or the suffering that I might be experiencing now God is working His eternal purpose through it.

The day will come when I will bless God for this hardship rather than cursing Him as I am prone to do when things don't go right. The day comes when you bless God and thank God for the disappointments because you see how God was working out a plan that you couldn't understand. Best that I just yield. And here is my life, God, as You see fit. You know what's best. Work in me Your perfect plan.

Shall we pray.

Father, we thank You that we have Thy Word as a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, and may we walk in its light, Lord. That we might be instructed in the ways of righteousness and truth. And that we might come into Thy fullness. Lord, hide now Thy Word in our hearts. As we see life under the sun, the emptiness of it, the futility of it, may we seek to experience life in the Son, that eternity that You have put into our heart. May we find its fulfillment in Jesus Christ as we drink of the water of life. In His name we pray. Amen.

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Ecclesiastes 7:1-29 (AMP)

1 A GOOD name is better than precious perfume, and the day of death better than the day of one's birth. 2 It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to heart. 3 Sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better and gains gladness. 4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth and sensual joy. 5 It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise than to hear the song of fools. 6 For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity (emptiness, falsity, and futility)! 7 Surely oppression and extortion make a wise man foolish, and a bribe destroys the understanding and judgment. 8 Better is the end of a thing than the beginning of it, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. 9 Do not be quick in spirit to be angry or vexed, for anger and vexation lodge in the bosom of fools. 10 Do not say, Why were the old days better than these? For it is not wise or because of wisdom that you ask this. 11 Wisdom is as good as an inheritance, yes, more excellent it is for those [the living] who see the sun. 12 For wisdom is a defense even as money is a defense, but the excellency of knowledge is that wisdom shields and preserves the life of him who has it. 13 Consider the work of God: who can make straight what He has made crooked? 14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider that God has made the one side by side with the other, so that man may not find out anything that shall be after him. 15 I have seen everything in the days of my vanity (my emptiness, falsity, vainglory, and futility): there is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in [spite of] his evildoing. 16 Be not [morbidly exacting and externally] righteous overmuch, neither strive to make yourself [pretentiously appear] overwise—why should you [get puffed up and] destroy yourself [with presumptuous self-sufficiency]? 17 [Although all have sinned] be not wicked overmuch or willfully, neither be foolish—why should you die before your time? 18 It is good that you should take hold of this and from that withdraw not your hand; for he who [reverently] fears and worships God will come forth from them all. 19 [True] wisdom is a strength to the wise man more than ten rulers or valiant generals who are in the city. 20 Surely there is not a righteous man upon earth who does good and never sins. 21 Do not give heed to everything that is said, lest you hear your servant cursing you— 22 For often your own heart knows that you have likewise cursed others. 23 All this have I tried and proved by wisdom. I said, I will be wise [independently of God]—but it was far from me. 24 That which is is far off, and that which is deep is very deep—who can find it out [true wisdom independent of the fear of God]? 25 I turned about [penitent] and my heart was set to know and to search out and to seek [true] wisdom and the reason of things, and to know that wickedness is folly and that foolishness is madness [and what had led me into such wickedness and madness]. 26 And I found that [of all sinful follies none has been so ruinous in seducing one away from God as idolatrous women] more bitter than death is the woman whose heart is snares and nets and whose hands are bands. Whoever pleases God shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her. 27 Behold, this I have found, says the Preacher, while weighing one thing after another to find out the right estimate [and the reason]— 28 Which I am still seeking but have not found—one upright man among a thousand have I found, but an upright woman among all those [one thousand in my harem] have I not found. 29 Behold, this is the only [reason for it that] I have found: God made man upright, but they [men and women] have sought out many devices [for evil].

Tonight we want to return again to the book of Ecclesiastes beginning with chapter 7. And as we return to the book of Ecclesiastes, again, it is important that we make note of the fact that the book of Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon in his later years. After he had assiduously pursued to find the purpose and meaning of life in so many different things: in wisdom, in wealth, in fame, in building, in pleasures. And after his pursuit, which carried him into every area and experience of life, he came up with the conclusion that life is empty and frustrating. Solomon made the mistake of searching for purpose in life under the sun. And if your purpose is limited to under the sun, chances are you will come up, as Solomon, with the conclusion that life is a mistake. That it is not worthwhile. That everything is only filled with emptiness and frustration.

But God did not intend for you to live a life under the sun. God intended that you should experience real life in the Son. In First John we read, "And this is the record, that God has given unto us, even eternal life, and this life is in the Son. And he who has the Son has life" (I John 5:11-12). There is real life. There is real meaning and purpose to life. When you find the life in Jesus Christ.

The life apart from Him, apart from the spiritual dimension, living a life on the animal plane of a body-conscious experience and a body-conscious level will lead a person to despair even as the philosophies of today have concluded. That man will be led by reason to despair. Life is hopeless. Thus, man must take a leap into the upper story of experience and man must have some kind of a non-reasoned religious experience to save him from the despair of reality. And so the philosophy led man to the point of despair by reason. And then his only suggestion for man is jump out of reason. Become unreasonable. Take a leap of faith into a non-reasoned religious experience in order that you might not despair because life is hopeless. This is the conclusion that Solomon drew after trying everything.

Now as we read the book of Ecclesiastes, it is a book of despair. "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecclesiastes 1:14). The conclusions that Solomon came to are conclusions of natural, human reasoning apart from God. Therefore, they are not to be taken as doctrinal truths. You are dealing with a man searching for life apart from God and his conclusions are not doctrinal truths. Except that they do bring to you the end result of natural reasoning, but not divine wisdom. So they show you man apart from God and the despair and hopelessness of man apart from God. And the conclusions that are drawn are in that kind of a background. They're not doctrinal truths, because if you take the step into the spiritual level, you'll come to a far different conclusion of life.

Back in the book of Deuteronomy when God was giving the law to Moses, and because God could foresee down through time to that particular time in the history of the nation of Israel when they would demand a king, and because God knew that one day they would no longer be satisfied with Him being king over them and would want a king, God incorporated even into the law of Moses 400 years before they ever had a king, God incorporated laws for the kings. Because God knew that 400 years down the line the people were going to come to Samuel and say, "We want a king like the other nations around us. And because God knew they were going to say that, He incorporated into the law in the book of Deuteronomy laws for kings.

Now it is interesting as we look at the seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy, as God is setting up the laws for the king, beginning with verse 14 of the seventeenth chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, the Lord said, "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, 'I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me.'" And that's exactly what they said to Samuel, "Set us up a king over us that we might be like the other nations."

Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose. One from among your brothers shalt thou set king over thee. Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses. Forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away. Neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn the fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them. That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left. To the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

But verse 17, "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away."

It seems prosaic to declare God understands human nature. And God's laws are written for our admonition, and they weren't written in vain. "When you set up a king, one thing a king isn't to do, he's not to multiply wives lest they turn his heart away."

Now let's turn to First Kings, chapter 10. As we are reading of Solomon, remember he wasn't to multiply gold unto himself or silver or horses, but as we read in verse 14,

Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents. He had traffic of spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia. He made two hundred targets of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of gold went to one target. And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pounds of gold went into one shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. Moreover, he made a great throne of ivory, who overlaid it with the best gold. [Down in verse 21,] All of the drinking vessels were of gold, the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver, for silver was counted as nothing in the days of Solomon. [Verse 27,] And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars to be as the sycamore trees in the valley, for the abundance. And Solomon had brought horses out of Egypt (I Kings 10:14-19, 21,27,28).

He's not to multiply horses, not to go back to Egypt. Solomon's so far getting an F for the course.

And as we get into chapter 11,

But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites, and of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, [He's not to multiply wives, oh. Flunk him.] three hundred concubines: [And what does it say?] and his wives turned away his heart (I Kings 11:1-3).

Four hundred years earlier God had warned about this very thing. God had forbidden this very thing with the warning, lest they turn his heart away. Solomon thought he could beat God. He thought he knew better than God. He thought he knew better than the law of God. But you don't.

God knows your human nature better than you know it yourself. And God has given laws to protect you. For God knows what the consequence of the violation of these laws will be.

For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after [the pagan gods of] Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, the Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem (I Kings 11:4-7).

Actually it's on the, if you've been over to Jerusalem that hill that goes on up to the Mount of Olives down at the area of Gihon Springs. That is the hill where he built all of these and it's in the sight of all Jerusalem. It's right across the valley. It's in the sight of all Jerusalem. He began to build these pagan temples, a place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. "And also likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods" (I Kings 11:8).

So every time he married a wife from some different area, he'd build a temple for her so she could go over and burn incense to her god right across the hill where all of Israel could see.

So Solomon had turned his heart away from God, and in turning his heart away from God, he lost the meaning of life and the purpose of life. And now he is an old man and he is writing of his experience. The consciousness of the greatness of Jehovah, God of Israel, has passed from his mind. And he's trying to find life apart from God. And he finds that life apart from God is nothing but emptiness. Therefore, you cannot take as scriptural doctrine the conclusions that Solomon came to in regards to life and death, because he is reasoning, this is the reasoning of man apart from God and you need to look at the book of Ecclesiastes as that.

Human wisdom, perhaps in its highest expression, yet apart from God is foolish. As God said in Romans, chapter 1, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22). And any time you in your human wisdom seek to find a purpose of life apart from God, it's foolish. Your wisdom has led you to foolishness.

Now chapter 7 of Ecclesiastes is a series of proverbs and, of course, Solomon was filled with proverbs. We just have completed the book of Proverbs of which the majority were written by Solomon, and in chapter 7 he does go into another series of proverbs, sort of unrelated again to each other, but just little sayings of human wisdom.

A good name is better than precious ointment (Ecc 7:1);

Better to have a good name than to have good perfume.

and the day of death than the day of one's birth (Ecc 7:1).

Now that sounds pretty much in despair, doesn't it? "Oh, the day of a person's death is better than the day of his birth." That's one who has become cynical because he has sought to find life apart from Jesus Christ. And in that case, it may be true. But living with Christ is a glorious life.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of merriment (Ecc 7:2-4).

So he has taken a very jaundice view of life, a very jaundice view of pleasure, of joy, because apart from the Lord it is all emptiness. It is all a sham. And because he was seeking it apart from God, he experienced the emptiness of it, and thus, he became a bitter old man. Bitter with life.

It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: it's just emptiness. Surely oppression makes a wise man mad; and a gift destroys the heart. Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger rests in the bosom of fools. Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this (Ecc 7:5-10).

You always hear them talk about the good old days. They say that's not always so true. The good old days when we didn't, when you women didn't have automatic dishwashers and vacuum cleaners, and wall-to-wall carpeting in your house, supermarkets down the block. You all grew your own gardens. Ground your own flour. Used the scrub board. Oh, the good old days. No, we have it pretty nice. We always look back, though, and we think about the days of our youth when Orange County wasn't crowded, when it was full of orange trees instead of subdivisions. But there are advantages both ways.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. For wisdom is a defense, and money is a defense: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom gives life to those that have it (Ecc 7:11-12).

Money's good, but wisdom will give life to those that have wisdom.

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Money's good, but wisdom will give life to those that have wisdom. Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? (Ecc 7:13) Who can actually do anything against the work of God? We're powerless and helpless against the work of God.

In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that a man should find nothing after him. All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongs his life in his wickedness (Ecc 7:14-15).

I've observed this. There have been good men who perished, died young in their righteousness. There were wicked men who lived many years. Therefore, his conclusion. Now it's not scriptural, it's not biblical. I mean, it's not in the sense, it's not godly. Human looking at life. Seeing that righteous man died young and a sinner lived to be a D.O.M., became a dirty old man, he came to this conclusion. Truly just pure human wisdom.

Don't be overly righteous (Ecc 7:16); Don't get too involved in righteousness. neither make thyself over wise: why should you destroy yourself? (Ecc 7:16) Now it's a wrong conclusion. The righteous don't always die young. There are some beautiful old saints of God. But don't be overly righteous. Why should you kick off soon? Also,

Don't be overly wicked (Ecc 7:17), Be moderately wicked. neither be thou foolish: why should you die before your time? (Ecc 7:17) So purely human type of reasoning of life.

It is good that you should take hold of this; yes, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all. Wisdom strengthens the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city. For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not (Ecc 7:18-20).

Now, in this he was correct. The Bible said, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). The Bible says, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). A human observation that is correct. Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear your servant curse thee (Ecc 7:21): They say that an eavesdropper rarely hears anything good about himself. You know, you're that kind of person that's always trying to eavesdrop on other's conversations. And so he's sort of warning you against that. Don't take heed; don't try to listen to what they say. You're going to find out they're cursing you.

For [you know how that] oftentimes in your own heart that you have likewise cursed others. All this have I proved by wisdom (Ecc 7:22,23): Not by God, I proved it by wisdom. But the wisdom of man, the scriptures said, is "foolishness with God" (I Corinthians 3:19). I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me. That which is afar off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out? I applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even the foolishness and madness: And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleases God shall escape from her; but the sinner will be caught by her. Behold, this have I found, saith the Preacher (Ecc 7:23-27). Or the debater, or the word... it was translated into the Septuagint ecclesia, the assembler. one by one, to find out the account; Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found (Ecc 7:27-28).

So in all his thousand wives he did not find a decent one. Now, he did find one man out of a thousand. So men have a little better record as far as Solomon is concerned. But you might, of course, also observe he didn't marry any men and you don't really know a person till you marry them. But if he was, you know... people, it's interesting people seem to repeat mistakes, and you find a person who has been married five, six, seven times. It really can't be that the other person was wrong all the time. You say, "Well, it might be. It might be the person is just a, who has been married that many times is just a poor judge of character." And they're following a pattern because we often do. We married the same kind of person. And always you think, "Oh, the second time around, you know, I'll be wiser, make better choices and all." But we are bound by certain patterns and if, of course, you get a godly, righteous woman, her price is "far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10). And you'll find one in a thousand every time. You find one who loves the Lord. How glorious it is, how beautiful it is to have a wife who loves God, who calls upon the Lord. What a blessing, what an asset they are to our lives.

Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions (Ecc 7:29). God made us straight, but boy, how we have searched otherwise. (Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries,1979-1986)

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 997-1013)

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