

An Unsatisfied & Joyless Life

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[0 : 00] Biggest book. And then you go right. After Psalms comes Proverbs. After Proverbs comes Ecclesiastes. Written reportedly by Solomon.

We think either it is a very late Solomon who had apostatized. Or a, what do you call it? An anonymous writer who is proposing to be a Solomon type person. And I remind you as we read through Ecclesiastes.

It is truth but only partial truth. It is truth primarily from the perspective of under the sun. An earthly horizontal perspective.

So keep that in mind. Okay. Because you read it. It's like, oh, it's a lot of. Man, he's a pessimist. He's a half glass full guy. The best you can do.

[0 : 58] That's it really. That's it. So keep that in mind. It is an incomplete wisdom that we fill out by looking at the New Testament. By remembering what Jesus has said.

And it's good literature for us to test ourselves upon to see if these things are so. It's a lot like the book of Job. Remember the book of Job? You had voices in the book of Job that gave truth but not the full truth.

You had the friends of Job who are giving a certain perspective that at the end of the book is corrected. Right? So this is a similar kind of literature that we're dealing with here.

We're hearing a voice. This preacher guy. Can't trust preachers. Right? So you've got to evaluate. You've got to check out what the preacher is saying. Right? Right?

Anybody awake? All right. Good. All right. Ecclesiastes chapter 5. We're going to read from verse 8 through 6. Chapter 6 verse 9. It is all one unit. I'll show you that in a moment.

[1 : 59] So if you're able, please stand as I read Ecclesiastes 5 beginning verse 8. If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at this matter.

For the high official is watched by a higher. And there are yet higher ones over them. But this is gain for a land in every way.

A king is committed. Well, that's a bad translation. The king is served by cultivated fields. He who loves money will not be satisfied with money.

Nor he who loves wealth with his income. This also is vanity. When goods increase, they increase who eat them.

And what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much. But the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

[3 : 09] There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun. Riches were kept by their owner to his hurt. And those riches were lost in a bad venture.

And he is a father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. As he came from his mother's womb, he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand.

This also is a grievous evil. Just as he came, so he shall go. And what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness, in much vexation and sickness and anger. Behold, look, look, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun, the few days of his life that God has given him.

For this is his lot. Everyone also, to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil, this is the gift of God.

[4 : 40] For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart. There is an evil that I have seen under the sun and that lies heavy on mankind, a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor so that he lacks nothing in all he desires.

Yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity. It is a grievous evil.

If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he.

For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and in darkness its name is covered. Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything, yet it finds rest rather than he, even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good.

Do not all go to one place. All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his soul is not satisfied. For what advantage has the wise man over the fool?

[6 : 07] And what does the poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living? Better. Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul.

This also is vanity and striving after wind. So it reads. Let us pray for some insight.

Father, we thank you for this word. We know that it is word. It is the canon of scripture. It has been accepted through all these years. And yet, Father, as we read it, we wonder, we wonder, that's not all, is it?

Because we know from what Jesus says, from what the apostles say, that this is not all. And so grant us the eyes of wisdom to see and discern and to recognize what is good and what is not good.

And what truly gives us fulfillment. What truly gives us enough. What gives us contentment and joy.

[7 : 16] This we pray. Father, that you make clear in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So, there are a number of proverbs in this passage.

There are at least six different proverbs. For example, verse 10 is a proverb. He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with profit.

That's a proverb. It's a statement. It's an advice. It's an observation. General observation about truth. So, lots of proverbs.

Confucius used to give proverbs. Used to speak proverbs. And so I came across a list that some say is Confucius, but some say is not. So, you be the judge.

These are some proverbs of general truth. Man who wants pretty nurse must be patient. I don't know.

[8 : 18] Is that him? Man who leaps off cliff jumps to conclusion. I mean, it's true, but I don't know if that's Confucius.

Man who runs in front of car gets tired, but man who runs behind gets exhausted. Really? I mean, didn't you get this in your fortune cookie? Man who eats many prunes get good run for money.

Man who stands on toilet is high in pot.

Yeah, I know. Sorry. It's getting worse. Wise man does not keep sledgehammer and slow computer in the same room. Finally, Confucius probably did not say, man who lives in glass house should change clothes in basement.

So, just some wisdom. Real proverbs are better than that. Like, he who loves money is never satisfied with money.

[9 : 28] And that's where we're going today. This text we read is, except for a couple of verses, a very discouraging text.

Very, looking at the evil in life, looking at the dissatisfaction. It's really about an unsatisfying and joyless life that many experience. And many people experience that kind of, very kind of life.

The phrase, not satisfied. Four times in this text. Not satisfied, not satisfied, not satisfied. Never enough, never enough. It's like that song. Never enough, never enough.

It's all about me, it's all about me. Never enough. I know that's not how the song goes, but that's what it reminded me. And then I looked up the lyrics, and oh, it's a love song. I don't know. So, never enough.

They're unfulfilled. Life seems pointless. Empty. There's got to be more. So, we see false hopes presented here.

[10 : 31] Two kinds of false hopes. One wealth, one about family. In false hopes and things that cannot give meaning to life.

Wealth, wealth solves some immediate problems, right? This wealth can fix some things temporarily, temporarily, but they also, wealth also adds an abundance of other problems.

The more you have, more to worry about. More to lose. So, when life is hard, when life is miserable, when life is unfulfilling, we think, if I just had this, or a little bit more of that, or less of that, or a better this, so what's the answer?

The answer in this text is about how we see. How we see. Your world view. So, he mentions over and over again, I have seen, if you have seen, or this person sees this, this person doesn't see this, it's about seeing.

It's about a perspective. It's about a world view. But it's more than just a world view. Because if it's a world view that does not incorporate almighty God, then it will be never enough.

[12:01] It's an under the sun world view. Okay? So, Ecclesiastes raises these kinds of, two kinds of false hopes.

He calls them evil. Two evils that he has seen under the sun. And then he points to an answer. Let me show you how he points to an answer. On your outline, if you have the outline, the first point is about a guide from our text.

A guide from the text structure. I don't usually point this out, but I love to point out a chiasm. They seem like two different texts. The end of chapter 5, from 5, 8, all the way to the end of chapter 5. And then beginning in chapter 6, 1 through 9, they seem like two different texts. And yet they're both part of the same text.

Let me show you how. There's a chiasm. A chiasm is a mirroring. It's a half of an X shape. So, the story goes this way, and then it goes back that way.

[13:04] And there's a mirroring between the beginning of the story and the end of the story. So, the first part is reflected in the second part. Let me show you how. So, there are different...

The story unfolds. Chapter 5 unfolds A, B, C, D. Okay? So, A, chapter 5, verses 8 through 10, talks about the love of money is not satisfying.

It ends in vapor. It ends in vanity. Unfulfilling, empty, no joy. Then at the end of the story, go all the way down to the next A, down at the bottom, chapter 6, verses 7 through 9, we see that same phrase repeated.

The soul is not satisfied now. And that ends in vapor. Okay? So, the beginning of the story and the end of the story are the same. There's no satisfaction, and the no satisfaction ends in vapor.

It's just a puff of smoke. It's elusive. What we have does not last. Right? So, then you go to B.

Okay? So, then the first part, 5, 13 to 17. Now, he talks about a father.

[14:02] He fathers a son, and as a result, eats in darkness. Okay? That's kind of weird, but those phrases. Then you go down to the second B in chapter 6, verses 3 to 6. Talks about fathering children again.

Not just one, but 100. Talks about fathering children. And then, as a result, goes to darkness. Okay, weird again, but okay, same parallel.

Okay? Then you go back to the first story, chapter 5, verse 18. This part C. He says, now he sees something. I have seen good. He says in verse 18.

God gives. Okay? Then in the second story, chapter 6, verses 1 and 2. I have seen not good this time. I've seen evil.

In relation to God giving. Interesting. He's saying the way God gives or doesn't give is an evil thing in his mind. Okay?

[15:01] Don't miss that. And then the heart, the soul of the whole thing, the arrowhead. See the arrowhead? A, B, C, D, A, B, C, D.

He's pointing right at his point. Or if we invert it, it's the mountaintop. They both come to the point. That's the point. D, which is verse 20 of chapter 5.

The answer is God. God is the difference in all of this. The one who answers and keeps joy in our heart.

Who's that person? That's the focal point. So the other parts of the story, the chapter 5 leading up to the end and then chapter 6, which is reflecting the same thing.

Those are both sad stories. Those are both evils. Those are both under the sun. Right there at the arrowhead is the point. Okay? So that's where we're going.

[16:03] So these two points are reflected. He says, I have seen evil in verse 13. I have seen evil under the sun, verse 13, which relates to beginning at chapter 5, 8 through 20.

And then verse 1 of chapter 6, I've seen evil. So he says, I've seen two kinds of evil. Okay? One kind of evil in chapter 5, which is related to wealth without satisfaction.

And then a second evil in chapter 6 that is related to a man who has everything. And what he adds to the other man in this chapter 6 is that he has a huge family.

He has a hundred children. And he lives a long life. He's got everything. This second man. He's a family man.

And yet, he has no joy. He has no satisfaction. Okay? So two different kinds.

[17:07] They're very similar, but one is kind of, this guy's got even more. Okay? So, so two evils. One evil is wealth without satisfaction.

The other evil is having great family and a long life without satisfaction. Two kinds of false hope. We look for hope in wealth, in riches, we look for hope, even in family. A big family and a long life.

That's all I want. I don't want riches. I just want a family. I just want a big family. I just want a long life with my family. Again, without God, not enough.

Not enough. As good as that is, as great as that is, not enough. Soul not satisfied. Okay? So that's his, those are his points. So let's walk through this a little bit.

How do you find this gift of true satisfaction? How do you escape the empty life and discover the full, fulfilling life under the sun?

[18:05] What he talks about in verses 18 to 20. So, first of all, let's unfold it. So wealth without satisfaction. This is the first evil, the first vapor, the first elusive thing.

Wealth without satisfaction. Wealth that is hoarded, wasted, and a life that is miserable. Joyless.

So, in verses 8 to 10, he says, here's something that, if you see this, this is something that anybody can see, anybody can notice and observe.

If you see, in a province, oppression of the poor. Anybody seen that? Seen oppression of the poor? Yeah. Anybody seen a violation of justice? Injustice? Any injustice in our land?

Anybody seen that? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. We've all seen that. So he says, what? Don't be amazed. Well, we're not. We're used to seeing it, right? He's saying, yeah, it's normal.

It's normal. Don't be amazed at the thing. Why? Notice the four. The middle of verse 8. Do not be amazed at the matter. Why? Here's the reason.

[19:10] Here's the reason for the injustice. Here's the reason for the oppression. It's the officials. It's the bureaucracy. It's the high official who's watched over by a higher.

By the way, watched. Quotes. Watched. Is it watched over or gotcha, I gotcha. Watched over. Hmm?

Well, if it's a reason for oppression and injustice, it's the negative kind of watching over. The high official watches over the other high official. And there's another one watching over them.

You know, I gotcha, brother. I gotcha. Gotcha. Gotcha. Gotcha. It's all about us. And then, look at verse 9. Then, even the king. Even the king. Now, I know our translations try to make it positive. Boo-hoo. Translate the words. My translation says, verse 9, But it is gained for the land in every way. A king committed to cultivated fields.

[20:14] What a good king. He's committed to cultivated fields. No, that's not what it says at all. It says the king is served by the prophet of the land. Even the king's in on it.

That's why there's oppression. That's why there's injustice. Because it's a corrupt leadership. You ever seen that? We don't have that here, do we? We don't see it.

Come on. It's all good for us. They don't do it for them. Where do the gas prices go in this summer? That's for us.

Yeah. Right? Nothing they can't. Okay. Right? Get those, get those, those, what do you got?

Electric cars. We got to get that going.

We raise the gas prices. Oh, get the electric cars. That's the answer. Oh, yeah. Okay. Sorry. I'm just a little, you know, seen it.

[21:14] Too many times. So, he says, so what's the result? Verse 10. Yet, here are these people. This is how they make their money. How'd they make their money? By cheating people. They made their money by injustice.

They made their money by oppressing the poor. That's how they did it. And then, what? Verse 10.

So what's the, what's the moral of the story? Verse 10. Here's the proverb. He who loves money will not be satisfied with money.

Those people who make their money off the backs of others. Those are the people who make their money out of injustice and oppression. They will not be satisfied with the money they make. It's just money.

Nor who loves wealth with his income. It's vanity. It's chasing after the wind. It is unfulfilling, empty, and joyless. That's what he says. So, what are the problems?

So, here's, here's how it becomes vain. Verse 11. Now he's going to list a number of problems with wealth. You know, did you, can you believe that? There's problems with wealth. Wealth fixes things, doesn't it?

[22 : 17] Wealth answers our problems, doesn't it? It pays for the problems to go away, doesn't it? He says, no, I know this. I know this. I know there's problems with, yeah, I know on the, on the beginning side, yeah, it's great.

Great, great, great answers problems, fixes things at first. Wait till you've been wealthy a while. Then, then, then you get to see what. Okay, verse 11. What happens if you're wealthy? Well, when goods increase, they increase who eat them.

In other words, you're starting to feed other people now. It's not just me. Now I've got to include others because if I got a lot of wealth, then I need more help protecting it. And more help protecting it means I got to give some of it away to protect it and to serve it and to manage all my fields and all of a sudden all that money's not mine anymore.

I mean, I get some because I, you know, undercut the wage, the labors. So, and, and then what? Nor, where are we?

11. So, what advantage has the owner but to see them with his eyes? So, he's just seeing the money go through, go through, go through. It's gone. It's gone. My pocket to somebody else's pocket.

[23 : 28] Verse 12. What else is, is a problem with wealth? Well, sleep is, sweet is the sleep of a laborer. The guy's just working in the field who works real hard all day.

He can sleep at night. He didn't have a lot whether he eats little or not. I mean, he works hard, he sleeps at night. But, verse 12b, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

Literally, the full stomach of the rich is not satisfied with sleep. Never enough. No rest for the wicked. Verse 13, there's another, another problem.

And this one he calls a grievous evil. There's a grievous, a sickening evil that I've seen under the sun. Riches that were kept by the owner to his own evil.

Hoarded riches. And then verse 14, add to that, and then those riches were lost in a bad venture. We don't know what in something, something happened, some evil work, some evil deed, some bad work.

[24 : 37] They're lost. The riches are lost. And as a result then, he has a son, but he's got nothing in his hand to give to his son. So first he hoards it and then he takes a chance on something apparently and he loses everything and then he's got nothing to give to his son and that's evil because he had it and he hoarded it and he lost it.

So, what's that comparable to? verse 15. So, so to this guy that had it all, lost it all, you know, what's he got left?

As he came from his mother's womb, he shall go again. Naked he came, naked he goes. He shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. Again, he's empty handed. This also is a sickening evil.

Just as he came, so he shall go. What gain is there to him who toils for the wind? You get all this, you accomplish all this, you gain all this, you, did I say that? You, you, you, you pile up all this, right?

And then at the end you can't take it with you. Well, they always say no U-Hauls in heaven. Right? Job said the same thing when Job was at his bottom, you know, naked I came, naked I go.

[26 : 02] That's it. I'm done. It's over. And guess who took it all away in Job?

Did you read carefully who took it all away? Yeah, Satan. Yeah, yeah, but did you hear, how did Satan, never mind, okay, it's another story. God is sovereign. So then, what does he end up like? Look at verse 17. Here's the problems with wealth, right? You have more dependence, your wealth goes to others, you lose sleep, you hoard it, and then you lose it, and you got nothing for your heir. You die anyway, so it's pointless. Verse 17, how do you end your life? Verse 17, moreover, all his days, he eats in darkness.

darkness. What's that picture? He eats in darkness. Kind of picture of all alone. Darkness is gloom, gloom, right?

[27 : 01] He eats in darkness, not just that, but, my text is so marked up I can't find anything. I got colors going on. He eats in darkness in much vexation, he's frustrated, and sickness, and anger.

He's just, that's the end of his life. His life is a picture of absolute misery. Unsatisfying, and joyless. And the tragic thing is, is that story's told over, and over, and over, and over again, every generation. And it doesn't have to even be the wealthy person.

I mean, we're all wealthy compared to other countries. So, you know, by that measure, I mean, if I have enough to live in a house and to get groceries, then I'm wealthy.

Especially if I've got a fridge full of bread for, not just for today, but for tomorrow, and the day after that. I'm wealthy. And yet, I can be totally unsatisfied, unfulfilled.

[28 : 17] So, what's the answer? Wealth without God is unsatisfying and joyless. The answer, verse 18, is God. Here's a different way of seeing, it says, verse 18.

Behold. Now, I hope your translation left the word behold in there. Yeah? Is it? Good. Good. I used to have a New American Standard and I got the updated New American Standard and they took the word behold out and I just about threw fit.

Why would they do that? Because it's a device that the author uses to get your attention. Look, look, look. Here's how to see things.

Behold. It should have an exclamation point at the end of this word. Behold. Jesus said it all the time. Right? Behold, behold. Look, look, look.

I'm going to make a point now. Behold. What I have seen to be good and fitting, that word could be beautiful, what I have seen to be good and beautiful is to eat and to drink and to find enjoyment all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him.

[29 : 31] But what's good? It's to eat and drink and to find enjoyment in all the toil. But actually, this phrase, find enjoyment, that's not the actual translation is to see good.

Again, it's about seeing. It's not just to find enjoyment. How do I find enjoyment? It's to see good. To see good.

How do I see things? How do I see this world? Yes, there's evil. Yes, there's bad things. Of course, Ecclesiastes talks about all kinds of them. But can I still see good?

Could Joseph see good when he was in prison? I don't know. Not until he got out, I think. Right? And not until he had reconciliation with his brothers.

But what about Paul? Paul's in prison. He's going, rejoice in the Lord, rejoice in the Lord. Can he see good? How in the world does he do that? He sees good.

[30 : 39] It's a perspective. It's a worldview. It's a worldview with God who is sovereign in that worldview. Not a God just sitting out there and maybe you'll do this, maybe you won't. But a God who's actively working and intends everything.

Like Joseph said, you brothers intended evil for me but God intended my suffering, my imprisonment, my injustice for good.

He intended all the bad stuff for good too. That's a sovereign guy. Naomi. Remember Naomi? Lost her husband, lost her son. She'd say, I just had a bad, I just had bad luck.

What did Naomi say? Remember Naomi? Naomi? God did this. God did this. She's a good Jewish theologian.

Christian one too, if you like. God, of course God did that. God took her husband. God took her son. Her two sons. Took her dream away.

[31 : 43] All she wanted was long life and children. That's all she wanted. That was her dream. God took it away. Don't call me Naomi.

Call me Marah. Bitter. Because I'm bitter and I'm angry and it's God's fault. You see God that way? Look at this.

He says, to see good in the days that God has given me. So God's God's given me days. The time that I have, the days that I have are a gift from God.

The time that God has given. That's my lot. That's my portion. That's what he's given me. He has determined that. Way from the beginning. How many days I get.

He doesn't tell me. Good thing. Good thing he doesn't tell me. But those are a gift. But what else? Then notice verse 19. Here's where it all changed.

[32 : 42] Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions. He's also given them power to enjoy them. That's the difference.

He's given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them. He's given the ability to enjoy them. The person in verses 8 through 17 had no power to enjoy his wealth. Had no ability. And we're going to find out chapter 6. The other person the big family has no power to enjoy his family, his goods, all of his life. Only the person in verse 19. Why? Why does God do that? Why does God give some people the ability to enjoy their good things and other people he does not give to them? That's why in chapter 6 he calls it evil. God's unfair. God picks his favorites. That's how it looks to this writer.

[33 : 48] Not to this pastor. That's how it looks to this writer. So God gives wealth and the power to enjoy. That's a gift from God. He says this is a gift from God. This ability to enjoy, to see the good, to accept his lot and to rejoice in his toil.

This is a gift from God. Very few people have it. Not talking about the people that find little simple pleasures, you know, the carpe diem.

That's where this author lives, right? All you can do is just enjoy the few moments, you know, whatever. It's all you got. If there's no resurrection, then we eat, drink, and be merry because tomorrow you die.

So that's all you got. That's where this author stands. But he's hinting, writing scripture, he's hinting at something bigger. that there are some. He has noticed it.

I don't think he's one of them. He's noticed that there's other people that actually enjoy their life. They actually have the ability to enjoy it. Not just the little moments.

[34 : 50] They actually thoroughly enjoy. They see good. They see good in this wicked world. They see good. How do they do that? Okay? That's what he notices.

Verse 20. Here's the reason. Here's the arrowhead, right? For, this gift that comes, he will not much remember the days of his life. Remember, he always talks about remembering and being forgotten and all that kind of stuff.

Here he says, you know, the days of his life won't matter. It doesn't matter what happened before. It doesn't matter the regrets. It doesn't matter the abuses. It doesn't matter all the harms and the pains and the losses and all that.

It doesn't matter. He will not much remember the days of his life. Why? Because God keeps him occupied with the joy in his heart. He's got joy in his heart that overwhelms all of that.

It's like Paul says, whatever was gain to me, whatever was profit to me, whatever was image and success to me, it's nothing compared to knowing Jesus.

[35 : 52] You're a freak, Paul. Knowing Jesus, you're a Jesus freak. Oh, you only know the half of it. Because it's real.

Because even the suffering is good. Yeah, he's really weird, isn't he? Yeah. See, I know Jesus and it's all the difference in the world.

It's all the difference in the world. without Jesus, it's never enough. Never enough. Never enough. Never enough.

Unfulfilling. Empty. Unsatisfying. Momentary joy. He puts joy in my heart. David said the same thing in Psalm 4.

Listen to what David said. He said, there are many who say, who will show us some good? He's talking about, we can't see any good. Who will show us some good? David says, lift up the light of your face upon us, O Lord.

[36 : 58] You have put more joy in my heart than they who have their grain and wine and their wine is abounding. You know, they're partying down the road over there.

They got the festival. You know, the harvest is in. The wine is flowing and I'm more happy than they are because I got real joy, not just that temporary spiked joy, escape joy.

in peace. In peace, so much parallels what David says with this Ecclesiastes.

You've put more joy in my heart than they who have grain and wine abound. In peace, I'll both lie down and sleep. I can sleep. I can sleep. For, why?

For you alone, O Lord, you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. The whole reason I have joy, the whole reason I can see good, the whole reason that I can lie down and sleep at night is because of the Lord.

[38 : 08] That's it. You alone, nothing else that I have, it's just you, it's because I know you, because you love me, because, and David could tell you, I've made some big boo-boos.

That's, sorry, that's a really understatement of what he did. He did something very wicked. And still, the Lord did not abandon him. Still, the Lord forgave him because he was going to send his son to pay for what David did.

So, what is this gift of God's joy in our lives? How does it come to us? Well, brothers and sisters, it's the gospel. That's how it comes to us. Romans 5 tells us the gospel very clearly.

Paul says in Romans 5, he says, therefore, since we have been justified by faith, in other words, we're declared safe, we're declared not guilty, we're declared righteous by faith.

Since we've been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God. How? Through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we've also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.

[39 : 21] So, in other words, there was faith that I received justification, and then there's ongoing faith in which I continue to stand. It's an act of faith.

And we rejoice. So, he's got peace with God, now he's got joy. I've got joy and hope of the glory of God. It's something future. More than that, oh, here he goes, this knuckle, we rejoice and hope for the glory of God.

Yeah, I get that part, but then he says this Paul thing. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings. Oh, more than the glory you rejoice in your suffering.

Right? Yeah, I can even rejoice in my sufferings. Why? Because I know that it's for good. I know that my suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.

Hope, and hope does not put us to shame, though in suffering we may feel ashamed. But hope, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts.

[40 : 25] Is that just some sentimental, you know, kind of thing? Warm, fuzzy? No, look at what he says. He says, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

There's a gift. There's the life-changing gift. There's the relationship. There's the guarantee. There's the joy, the peace, the hope, all wrapped in one, poured out through God's love.

Well, how did that happen? He goes on. It's the gospel, remember. It's not just that, oh, God gives this. God just gives this. Why? How? For, while we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for some of the good people.

Right? Is that what you're saying? No, God died for the sincere. One's with a, you know, good heart. No, that's not what he says. Christ died for the ungodly.

The people that didn't even think about God. The people that, that just did life for themselves and didn't even care. That's the godless. God's not in my life. Died for them.

[41 : 32] Why? One will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps a good person would even dare to die. I mean, I can see a mother dying for his child and that kind of thing. But, but God shows his love for us in that while we're still sinners before we believed, while we're still sinners, rebels, rejecters of him, Christ died for us.

See the gospel? Four points of the gospel. God, man, Christ, faith. God, God's the giver of peace, joy, hope, love.

Man, man's the guy that, that he's the sinner, the ungodly. He's the one who doesn't have peace until God gives it to him. Right? That's the man. Then Christ, what's Christ got to do with it? He makes it all happen.

He's the one that dies in the place. And then faith, that's how we receive it, by faith. We've been justified by faith. And we continue to live by faith.

That's how we keep standing in grace. That's how we're able to rejoice. That's how we're able to continue to have peace. That's how, even through tribulation, we're able to rejoice. Because we can see something.

[42 : 50] I don't just see what I'm suffering. I see, nope, God's got a reason for this. God's got a reason for this. God's got a reason for this. I trust God. I don't see it yet, but I'm looking for it because I know he always makes it good.

Always make it good. It might take 20 years, but he'll make it good. And besides, this life, it's vapor. I'm living for the next one. I'm living for the real thing. So, his first evil that he points out, the first false hope, the love of money is not satisfying.

But the love of God is. The love of God that pours out into us peace, joy, hope. Do you have that? Have you experienced that? So, if you haven't, talk to him.

Jesus said, come to me. Here's a second, a second evil he points out in chapter 6, verse 1. There's another evil I've seen under the sun.

[43 : 56] Lies heavy on mankind. This one bothers him, in other words. This one really bothers him. Literally, it lies heavy on, not mankind, but Adam. Keeps using Adam. Which is man.

Then a particular man who God gives wealth, possession, and honor. God gives him, look, God gives him wealth, gives him possessions, gives him honor. So that he lacks nothing of all that he desires.

He gets everything that he wants. Everything that he desires. Yet, here's the rub. Yet God does not give him the power, the ability to enjoy them.

But some stranger enjoys them. This is vanity. This is elusiveness. This is vapor. This is unfulfilling. This is not satisfying. This is a grievous evil. So he talks about this power of withhold.

God gives him everything, but not the power to enjoy it. In fact, a stranger enjoys it. It's a sickening evil, he says. So the big question is, because we already saw the other guy, the end of chapter 5, he gets the wealth and the ability to enjoy it.

[45 : 02] This guy gets the wealth and honor and everything, but doesn't enjoy it. And my, I believe the author's talking about himself now. I think this is his grievance.

He sees other people who have enjoyed what they have, and he, as he's told us in the beginning of the book, he's had it all, and he doesn't enjoy it.

In fact, carpe diem is the best you can do. Yeah, seize the day. Yeah, that's all you got. And I think he feels God is evil.

God gives to somebody who doesn't give to others. Why? That's the burning question behind this. Why? Why does God give all that enjoyment to the other people? And why does he give it to this person?

He gives them everything else. He gives them everything he wants. But joy. Difference in chapter, in chapter 5, 18 through 20, what's the difference?

[46 : 12] There's a relationship with God. There's a fear of God. That's the difference. This person has no relationship with God. He knows about God. He knows about God.

This may be Solomon at the end of his life. I mean, I can see that. When he, right, had everything and what did he want?

Gotta have some more women. I really love the women. I don't have a woman. I need a woman from every nation of the world. I don't know what he did. It just said that was his thing.

Couldn't get enough women. And so he abandoned God. He abandoned God for that. And undoubtedly, in doing that, he lost every sense of joy.

He had everything that he wanted and yet, he had no satisfaction. This kept drinking from that bottle. Just kept trying to find that that he could never get before, but maybe the next one will be the key.

[47 : 23] So, then he adds this, verse 3. Here's an example. Here's this rich person. He's wealthy. He's got everything he wants. Then he's got family. He's fathered a hundred children.

He lives many years so that the days of his years are many. But his soul is not satisfied with life's good. And then, his soul's not, he's got everything.

This is the guy, he doesn't just have the wealth, he's got the honor, and then he's got a huge family. And then he's got many years that he lives. Now, the Bible, correct me if I'm wrong, but does not the Bible say that many children are a blessing from God?

Doesn't it say that many years, a long life, is a blessing from God? Does that guarantee happiness? A big family, which is a blessing, does not mean you'll be happy.

Long life, which is a blessing, does not guarantee. In fact, for most, it's unsatisfied because it's without God. I want everything but God because I fix my own life.

[48 : 40] I make myself happy. Right? I can do that. No, you can't. So then he says, so what's better? This is where it gets kind of strange.

His soul's not satisfied with life's good and he has no burial. It's a bad ending. So he says, so for that guy, for that guy that's got everything, he's got everything, but his soul is not satisfied for that guy, his stillborn child's better than he is.

It's like, why do you say that? The unborn person is better? He's just saying someone that does not, he's not talking about an aborted child, he's talking about a child that just does not see life.

Why? Verse four, for it comes in vapor and it goes in darkness. In darkness, its name is covered. Nobody, nobody knows, right? He doesn't come into the world so we don't know. He's typically not given a name. Moreover, verse five, it has not seen the son or known anything. It's never seen all the evil in the world. Have you heard of people who say we're not going to have children because we don't want them to enter into an evil world?

[49 : 55] Yeah, that's a very common thing. I get it. Yeah, that's kind of this. He's not seen, he's better off because he's never experienced the evil.

So it's worse to be born and experience evil is what this author is saying. Jesus would not agree. Paul would not agree.

Understand, okay? This is incomplete wisdom. Yet it finds rest rather than he. Well, yet it finds rest because at least it has rest because it never came alive.

Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good. Don't all go to one place. Don't all go to the grave anyway. It doesn't matter. Even though he lives, even if he could live two thousand years, yet enjoy no good.

Literally, yet not see good. He doesn't see. He lives all these years. He has all these children. He has all this wealth and honor, but he can't see good.

[51 : 09] It's all vanity. It's all, he can't see it. Why can't he see it? Because that's a gift from God. It's a gift from God.

Alone, as David said. You, alone. Others are saying, many are saying, David said, right? Who can show us any good?

There's no good. David says, Lord, lift up your face. There's, there's, there's good. Lift up your face. You, you put more joy in my heart than the partiers.

That's kind of easy. So, verse seven, the point, what's the conclusion of all this?

It's a pointless life. He toils to eat, verse seven, all toil of man is for his mouth. Another proverb, all the work of man is for his mouth. Just say, I work to feed my mouth. I work to feed my mouth.

[52 : 11] I work to feed my mouth. Yet his soul, his soul is not satisfied. So, I, I externally, I'm feeding my mouth, but my soul, my real, my life, my soul, my desires, my, my longings are not satisfied.

So, what's the profit? Right? Verse eight, what's the, what's the point? What's the profit? The wise man dies just like the fool, so what's the advantage of wisdom?

And what about the poor man? The poor man, and not just any poor man, but what, what does the, the poor man have? The one who knows how to conduct himself before the living.

In other words, he's, he's not just a poor man, but he's also a moral man. He's a man with integrity. He knows how to live in front of the living. He knows how to walk. He's in, he's a moral man.

Will morality save you? Ask the Pharisees. So, no advantage for, for the moral man, no advantage for the wise man, if they don't have God.

[53 : 25] No point. So, he ends with another proverb, better is the sight of the eyes, than the wandering of the soul. Better the sight of the eyes, so how you see is better.

How you look at things, better the sight of the eyes, than the, soul, wandering around, looking for, what did Jesus say about the soul?

Remember? All right, in, in John 12, he said, hate your soul, in this world.

Hate it. Hate it. Why? So that you can save it. So you can save it. Your soul's your enemy.

Now, sometimes your soul is your best friend. Psalm 42, that's the soul, is what, that's the deepest part of me, the affections, long and thirst for God, right?

[54 : 28] That's good. And then in Psalm 42, it gets to say at the same time, yeah, but my soul is, you know, crushed. It's broken. Which to him is the same thing, when I'm broken and crushed, that's when I'm most thirsty for God.

So I can't trust my soul. My soul, what is, what does my soul want? It wants whatever it desires. It wants the quick way out.

It wants the easy way. It wants, you know, Jesus, at the moment of the cross, said what? Father, let this cup pass.

That's what my soul wants. My soul wants out of here. But he didn't let his soul have what it wanted. But not my will, but yours be done.

My soul wants out. Your soul ever wanted out? Yeah, yeah. It's natural. Of course your soul does. Your soul wants the easy way.

[55 : 28] Wants the quick way. Wants the quick fix. Wants the quick escape. The quick joy. I don't want to wait 20 years like Joseph. Then I'll never experience the joy that Joseph experienced.

I don't want to wait 12 years to get out of depression. Well, if I'd have known, you know, year one. Yeah, God doesn't tell you that your day is dizzy. So, it's about how you see.

Better the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul. It's about how your eyes see. Whether you see good or whether you see evil. It's not that you never see evil. It's not being stupid about, no, I don't see any bad.

It's recognizing the good out of the bad. Recognizing that God's purpose is bigger than the problem. So what does Jesus say? Jesus talks in the same language in John chapter 6.

He points a question at all people. He says, what are you working for? What are you laboring for? What's it about for you? What are you looking for? And to whom does God give the ability to enjoy your work and your life?

[56 : 45] Jesus narrows it down. John 6, 26, he says, Jesus answered them. Remember, this is after he fed the 5,000. Then he walked around to the other side of the lake and the crowd was following. Couldn't find him. Where'd Jesus go?

He walked across water, but they didn't know that part. So, you know, they finally find him on the other side of the lake and they say, where have you been? And Jesus answered them. Truly, truly, I said to you, you're seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate the loaves.

You saw the miracle, but it wasn't the miracle that changed you. It was, oh, you got free food. You got free food. You want some more free food. You just want to fill your belly. Then he says, do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life.

How do I get that food? Well, the Son of Man will give to you. For on him, the Father has set a seal. They said to him, what must we do to be doing the works of God? Jesus said to them, this is the work of God.

Here's what you do. Here's the work that saves you. The work that saves you is to believe in him whom God has sent. Believe. So they said to him, what sign do you do? That we may believe you.

[57 : 55] We want to believe you, but you got to do something to get us over the edge. What work do you perform? Our fathers, hey, they had a sign. Our fathers ate the man in the wilderness. As it is written, he gave bread, he gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses. It's not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my father who gives you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God, the real bread, not the manna that wastes away the next day, right? You can't save it for two days because it'll spoil unless it's Friday to Saturday.

But the true food that will not spoil, the true food that endures for life, the true bread from heaven is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. And they said, sir, give us this bread.

Okay? Jesus said to them, I am the bread. I am the bread of life. Whoever, how do I get that bread?

[59 : 05] Whoever comes to me, whoever comes to me, shall not hunger. That's kind of a satisfaction thing, isn't it? Shall be satisfied.

Whoever believes in me shall never thirst. Again, be satisfied. Here's Jesus' answer. What am I long, what am I laboring for? Am I laboring for the things that perish and go away?

Is that my goal? Or do I labor? Labor means it takes some work. Sometimes it takes some work to walk with Jesus, doesn't it?

Right? Because of those suffering things, the trial things, you know, the evil in the world. Okay, so it's not so easy. Not, you know, because the soul, sometimes it takes labor for the true bread that the Son gives you.

The life that the Son gives you gives you life so that you never hunger. So that you're sustained, you're fulfilled, you're sated. And how do you get that?

[60 : 11] He says, come to me. Which is another picture of believe in me. It's a personal thing.

It's not just believe. Okay, I believe Jesus died on the cross and He saved me from sin. I believe that concept. My head believes it.

I believed that growing up from day one. Didn't change my life. So what is believing?

It's more than that because the demons have that kind of belief. Right? They know who God is. So what's believing? What's also coming? Tim, it's also eating His bread.

It's partaking. It's also drinking. Right? It's all these pictures of faith. It's abiding, right? The vine and the branch. It's an active connection with Him. That's faith.

[61 : 10] Not a thought. Not an idea. Not a worldview even. It's a personal relationship. I keep coming. My soul thirsts.

Why? Because my soul is hurting. My soul is empty. My soul is broken. So what do I do? Quick fix? Oh yeah, I can do a quick fix. My soul will feel a little bit better for a little bit. I'll get some ice cream or something more serious.

I'll fix it for a little while but then, you know, then the lactate thing kicks in. I'm supposed to be done. I have no more notes. Okay. Better the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul. Let's pray.

[62 : 11] Father, we thank You for Your Word. We thank You, Lord, that we can take this Ecclesiastes and its incompleteness, completeness. Even its negativeness, we can take and evaluate by the rest of Scripture.

Particularly, we can evaluate it by Jesus' words and by His apostles' words. And then we can find the truth. We thank You that in this passage particularly, Lord, You had this author actually structure the text so that we could see the focal point and the answer is You.

So help us, Father, to labor for the food that endures. Help us to keep coming to Jesus. Help us to truly trust in Him day to day to stand in that grace.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.