

The Bible From 20,000 Feet Part 44

The Book of Ecclesiastes

Tuesday Night Bible Study, February 23, 2010

--OUTLINE

- OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES
- APPLICATION OF SOLOMON'S CONCLUSION IN OUR LIVES TODAY

--OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

--in part 43 we saw the gospel in Proverbs and in this study we'll see the gospel in Ecclesiastes.

--in the words of Proverbs we saw how we are saved from the second death in eternity.

--Ecclesiastes provides a contrasting backdrop that highlights the new purpose we have after we are saved from the second death – the purpose of living life in light of our new eternal destiny!

--Ecclesiastes is Solomon's soul-search book on the vanity and futility of life without the spiritual purpose of living life in light of our eternal destiny in Christ.

--recap of two key proverbs from part 43...

--Proverbs 22:3: "A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it."

--physical death is a road sign pointing to the danger of "the second death" that is before everyone, and there is only one way to escape the second death...

--Proverbs 11:4: "Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death."

--not our own righteousness but the righteousness of Christ that is "credited" (Romans 4:24) to all those who trust in Him.

--When the righteousness of Christ is credited to our spiritual account our names are "written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27) and we are shielded from the second death.

--misc passages from Ecclesiastes about the vanity of life without eternal purpose in Christ...

--Solomon pursued self-indulgent pleasure as far as possible, and in the end he said it was all "vanity and grasping for the wind." (Ecclesiastes 3:26)

--Solomon made the rhetorical statement, "For who can eat, or who can have more enjoyment, more than I?" (Ecclesiastes 3:25)

--how often do we think, *if only I could go down this or that path, or, if only I could have this or that*, then I'll be more happy? The book of Ecclesiastes is essentially Solomon's letter to us from all those places of getting what you think you need to be happy, and he tells us, *Don't waste your energy...all you need to be content is available to you right where you are now!*

--at the end of Ecclesiastes Solomon concluded, "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

--APPLICATION OF SOLOMON'S CONCLUSION IN OUR LIVES TODAY

--Solomon concluded "fear God and keep His commandments..." **when the barrier of sin between us and God is removed through faith in Christ, obedience takes on a whole new meaning!**

--God the Father and God the Son are in heaven and we are on earth, and when the barrier of sin between us and God is removed, we are immediately connected to God in heaven through His Spirit!

--God's commandments then become a guide to walking in step with God's Spirit!

in a very real sense, when we walk in God's Spirit we become the hands and feet and voice of Jesus on the earth and life is changed from vanity to heavenly purpose!

--when Jesus physically walked on the earth He was only able to minister to a small group of people, but through His children on earth-- "the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:1) -- He is able to minister to countless more people!

--Ephesians 2:8-10: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works [we are His hands and feet and voice!]** , which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

--Galatians 2:20-21: "I have been crucified with Christ [*in other words, I have died to my old sinful way of living, I have changed my purpose to following God's way, even though I stumble at times*]; **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

--1 Corinthians 6:18-20 is a powerful passage about the purpose of being a vessel for God's Spirit to work through: "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 **Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?** 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

--Ephesians 4:25-32 speaks of the danger of grieving the God's Spirit and the purpose of being the hands and feet and voice of Jesus to others.. "Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another. 26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 **nor give place to the devil.** 28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. 29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 **And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**"

--a classic hymn about being the hands and feet and voice of Jesus!

Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee.
Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from Thee.
Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use every power as Thou shalt choose.
Take my will, and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne.
Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee.

--It is easy to lose sight of the simplicity of the Christian life!