

Disgust and Delight | Ecclesiastes 2:18-26

I hate all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This is vanity and a great evil. What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

The Problem with Work

1. You can't keep it
 - a. Inheritances (1 Kings 12);
 - b. Succession
2. Work
 - a. Thorns and thistles;
 - b. Demands;
 - c. Various effects;
 - d. Idolatry

The Gifts of God

1. Work
 - a. "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer." (1 Timothy 4:4-5)
2. Justice
3. Wisdom
 - a. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight." (Proverbs 9:10)

4. The Table

- a. "Ordinarily, we eat and drink simply as fuel to enable us to keep going with our work. Ordinarily, we work not just to earn a living but to find satisfaction and purpose and very likely to make a reputation for ourselves and achieve success. What if the pleasure of food is a daily joy that we ungratefully overlook? What if our work was never intended to make us successful but simply to make us faithful and generous?" (David Gibson)

5. Joy

- a. "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Benediction | Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.