



Ecclesiastes: How To Be Satisfied

- Glad you are here!
- Part 2 of a short series on the wisdom from the book of Ecclesiastes

INTRO: ARE YOU HAPPY?

- "Everyone you meet always asks if you have a career, are married or own a house as if life was some kind of grocery list. But no one ever asks you if you are happy." - **Heath Ledger**
 - Recently, Emmitt has been one to ask us "are you happy" or "Is Kellen happy?"
 - "Will you be happy if I make this Lego building?"
- Happy → Satisfied = content, pleased, fulfilled
- **NOTE:** Pleasure itself is NOT Inherently BAD!
 - **Gen. 1:31** - "God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good...." = pleasant
 - God was pleased by His creation

- God designed for us to take pleasure, be delighted by certain things in the **proper** contexts!
- Just because it feels good, doesn't mean it IS good (morally) NOR does it mean it is (BAD)
 - Who defines GOOD or BAD is NOT us, but its God!
 - He's defined what context makes some pleasures good/bad
- Solomon's Purpose for Ecclesiastes - a pursuit of happiness, a pursuit of what could satisfy him completely
 - **1:13** - "And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven..."
 - **2:3** - "to see what good there is for the sons of men to under heaven all the days of their lives"
 - Solomon began to test everything in the earth that gave him satisfaction/pleasure

I. IS THERE ANYTHING EARTHLY / PHYSICAL THAT WILL SATISFY US?

1. WILL LAUGHTER SATISFY?

- "laughter is the best medicine" → it certainly has its place/purpose
 - **Eccl. 3:4** - "a time to weep, and a time to laugh"

- But, will laughter bring you lasting happiness?
 - **Eccl. 2:2** - "
 - laughter, comedy, something that pleases the flesh
 - It's how I cope with sad things
 - "madness" → foolishness, a thing to be ridiculed
 - You'll always have to tell another joke or hear another one to keep laughing

2. WILL LIQUOR SATISFY?

- "wine" in the Bible is a general word and its alcoholic content depends on the context!
 - Can mean that which is still in the grape to that which has been fermented
 - Here in this context, its clearly speaking of an alcoholic beverage
 - he says he is exploring "foolish things"
- **Eccl. 2:3** - it satisfies "the flesh"
 - We are not after fleshly pursuits!
- What about **9:7** and **10:19**?
- **Prov. 20:1** - "Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise."

- **23:29-35** - "Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?""
- **Eph. 5:18** - "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,"

3. WILL LABOR SATISFY?

- Some people love to "work with their hands" - woodworking, metalwork, etc.
 - gives great satisfaction when you have the finished product, doesn't it?
- **Eccl. 2:4-6** - "I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made myself

water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove."

- **2 Extremes:**

1. All Work is BAD, so I won't do any

- Work is NOT a choice, nor a CURSE! Work was required in the Garden of Eden

- God says "if a man will not work, neither should he eat!" (1 Tim.

2. Work is my ALL, so I won't have any time for God or family

- Working so much that its your only focus, you lose time for God, and you lose time for your family

- **Eccl. 2:18-23** - "Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because 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 rule over all my labor in which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also is vanity. Therefore I turned my heart and despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled under the sun. For there is a man whose labor is with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; yet he must leave his heritage to a man who has not labored for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has toiled under the sun? For

all his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity."

- **4:8** - "there is no end to all his labors...this also is vanity and a grave misfortune"
- These days, there's a "Hustle" culture these days where people are encouraged to have 2 or 3 jobs, working overtime hours every day and having no time for God nor their families
 - Some live to work - make that their identity
 - nothing wrong with that inherently
 - wrong when work for ourselves or work for mankind comes before our work for God!
- **1 Thess. 4:11-12** - "that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing."

4. DOES LUXURY SATISFY?

- **Eccl. 2:7-8a** - "I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me. I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces."

- **4:8** - "nor is his eye satisfied with riches"
- **5:10-11** - "He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; Nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity. When goods increase, They increase who eat them; So what profit have the owners Except to see them with their eyes?"
- The Pyramids of Giza
 - served multiple purposes:
 - Helped them to be "reborn in the afterlife"
 - believed to have been chosen by "god" to be mediators on earth
 - they needed to keep their "majesty intact" after his death
 - Prestige/Fame - the bigger the pyramid, the more social status you had/continued to have
 - "the corpse was mummified, and everything the king would need in the afterlife was buried with him, including gold vessels, food, furniture and other offerings."
 - "Their riches would provide not only for him, but also for the relatives, officials and priests who were buried near him."

- These show us that we cannot take our stuff with us! Their stuff did not go with them, their riches, their gold, their spices did not follow them into the afterlife
- The stuff in this world does not matter as much as we sometimes think it does
 - **Mk. 10:24** - "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!"
 - **1 Tim. 6:10** - the "love" of money is the root of all kinds of evil!
 - Of course, Solomon was given great wealth by God, but he began to trust in those things over time to bring him happiness/satisfaction
 - **1 Tim. 6:17** - "Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy."

5. WILL LISTENING (MUSIC) SATISFY?

- King Saul had David as his chief musician
 - Used him to help soothe his soul
 - Yet, even the music did not stop him from throwing a spear at David in his rage
- **Eccl. 2:8b** - "...I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and

musical instruments of all kinds."

- Solomon says that musical pursuits will **not** satisfy!
 - Playing/writing music
 - Listening to music
- My dad loves to play the guitar when he has some free time
 - He enjoys that, but he doesn't make that his life
 - He doesn't find ultimate satisfaction in that, but in God!

6. WILL LUST SATISFY?

- **Eccl. 2:10** - "Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor."
 - **1 Ki. 11:3** - "he had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines..."
- **9:9** - "Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life..."
 - "See life" or "find delight"
 - I believe its in his reflection back to the days of when he only had 1 wife, in which Solomon wrote the Song of Solomon or Song of Songs

→ about a proper love between husband & wife

- “Flee youthful lusts” (**2 Tim. 2:22**) → out of the confines of a God-approved marriage, this desire and pleasure is an abomination to God
 - It will not satisfy!

7. WILL LEARNING SATISFY?

- Wisdom won't keep you from dying, but will it keep you happy? Content?
 - Solomon finds out it won't
- Some people seemingly stay in school or taking courses for all their life - some just like learning that much they'll
 - I had 8 years of College-level courses after HS
- **Eccl. 2:9** - “So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.”
 - **v. 12-17** - “Then I turned myself to consider wisdom and madness and folly; For what can the man do who succeeds the king?— Only what he has already done. Then I saw that wisdom excels folly As light excels darkness. The wise man's eyes are in his head, But the fool walks in darkness. Yet I myself perceived That the same event happens to them all. So I

said in my heart, "As it happens to the fool, It also happens to me, And why was I then more wise?" Then I said in my heart, "This also is vanity." For there is no more remembrance of the wise than of the fool forever, Since all that now is will be forgotten in the days to come. And how does a wise man die? As the fool! Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun was distressing to me, for all is vanity and grasping for the wind."

- Wisdom certainly is better than foolishness (even "under the sun")
 - But pursuing wisdom as satisfaction will result ultimately in a never-ending pursuit!
 - "I hated life..." Solomon says (**v. 17**)
 - **1:18** - "For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases in knowledge increases sorrow."
 - There will always be more to learn in this life, it will never satisfy fully

None of this satisfies! It all satisfies a portion of the flesh for a time



“When a person can't find a deep sense of meaning, they distract themselves with pleasure.”

VIKTOR FRANKL

- “Vanity of vanity, all is vanity”
 - **Eccl. 1:8** - “All things are full of labor; Man cannot express it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor the ear filled with hearing.”
 - Solomon tried everything and is able to tell us that none of it satisfies longer than but for a moment
 - EVEN when you live a life for God, these things do not satisfy in the long run (physical pleasures as designed by God, do not last)
- **2:10-11** - “all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun”
 - Fleshly Pursuits ALWAYS leave you wanting more!

- Fleshly Pursuits NEVER satisfy the soul!
 - “abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul”! - **1 Pet. 2:11**
- That “hole” can only be filled by God Himself

THE CONCLUSION: WHAT WILL SATISFY?

- You’ll get all kinds of answers from the world
 - Teladoc Health - Want to be happier? Take the 30-day gratitude challenge
 - gratitude is certainly part of having enduring satisfaction
 - Exercise, go outside, get some sunshine
 - Reduce Stressors - turn off the news, stop scrolling facebook, etc.
 - Sleep More or Sleep Less
 - We tell Emmitt every single day that “sleep helps you listen better”
 - But there is such a thing as “too much sleep” if that’s the majority of your day
 - Helping others
 - Aristotle - “Happiness depends upon ourselves”
- Those will certainly help, no doubt, its the way God designed our bodies and this world
 - **Eccl. 12:13-14** - “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His

commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil."

- However, if you do all of those things and do not serve God with all your soul, mind, & strength, you'll be no better off in the long run
 - **Col. 3:17** - "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."
- When we go to the Bible for our answers, we're getting our answers from the Creator of the Human Body and of the creation and all its workings!
 - When we get to the end of this book, we find that ONLY a life lived for God is one that satisfies completely and satisfies in the END
- Living your life for God rather than for your pleasures
 - Pursue God like Solomon pursued all these things!
- Charlie Brown "meme":
 - "I think if we chased Jesus as hard as we chased the things we think we want, we would end up with more than we ever need."
 - **Matt. 6:33** - "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

- If you want to be truly “satisfied” with your life, be a servant of God! Let His will be yours.
 - Serve Him with all your heart, soul, mind, & strength - **Matt. 22:37** → anything less will not be accepted!
 - Are you satisfied?

INVITATION: MORE IMPORTANTLY, ARE YOU SAVED?

If you have not obeyed the Gospel plan of salvation, you are not a child of God, but you CAN be today

- If you want to begin your service to God this morning by being immersed in water to receive forgiveness of your sins
 - **Acts 22:16** - “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
- If you have fallen away and want to return to active duty as a faithful Xian
- If you need prayers for strength to overcome a particular trial or temptation
- If you have any need, please come down to the front or take on of our elders aside