

Ecc14 – **Rightly Handling Wrongs – Ecclesiastes 8:1-17**

Last Week we did – **How** to Handle the **WHY’S** in this life
Today we do – **How** to Handle the **WRONGS** in this life

Last week was – **WHY** the **WHY’S**
This Week is – **WHY** the **WRONGS**

Solomon’s goal at this point of the Book
seems clear to me

He’s **trying** to help us **LEARN** - how to **BE CONTENT**
& **BE JOYFUL** – in this *life under the sun*

& **THAT** – is a very **GOOD Lesson** – to Learn

I have a brother (a birth brother) who **lives**
Completely **“Off The Grid”** in HI

He is **homeless by choice** & lives in the **dense forest** growth
on the **North Shore of Oahu**

& **sometimes** – it’s a **bit hard to talk** to him for very long

because he is **absolutely obsessed**
with all the **“WRONG”** - that **exists** in the world

& when I can - I try to share with my brother
what Solomon shares with us - in the Last Vs of ECC Ch 7

Let me share from - The MSG - Ecclesiastes 7:29 (MSG)
29 . . . God made men and women true and upright; we're the ones who've made a mess of things.

I try to Remind my brother – that the SOURCE of the WRONG
Is Curse of the SIN NATURE that is in ALL of Mankind

& my brother AGREES – God made it RIGHT
& WE are the ones – who create the WRONGS

But the Big Question is:
HOW do we “*Rightly Handle The WRONGS*”

& Ecclesiastes DOES have the answer – to that question

& In the Answer to that Question – is a Great Lesson

on how to BE CONTENT - & HAVE JOY
in this “*Life under the sun*”

So – Let's Pray that we DON'T MISS IT

Solomon starts Ch 8 – with a Picture of how GREAT it is to possess - Godly WISDOM

& I think he does it – in order to give us the ANSWER BEFORE he addresses the QUESTION

Here it is - Ecclesiastes 8:1 (NLT)

1 How wonderful to be wise (God's Wisdom), to analyze and interpret things. Wisdom lights up a person's face, softening its harshness.

Man – that is GOOD – Isn't it?

There's nothing better – than having God's Wisdom
To analyze & interpret - the crazy things in this life

It will lead to CONTENTMENT - & Give you PEACE

BUT – It is NOT - Being Wise in your OWN Eyes!

It is the OPPOSITE of - Being Wise in YOUR own Eyes

BEFORE we can GET - God's Wisdom

We've GOT to Correctly Understand - our OWN WISDOM

Proverbs 3:7 (NLT)

7 Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, FEAR THE LORD and turn away from evil. (we talked about that last week)

(Proverbs 1:7 – the Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom)

Proverbs 26:12 (NLT)

12 There is more hope for fools than for people who think they are wise.

Isaiah 5:21 (NLT)

21 What sorrow for those who are wise in their own eyes and think themselves so clever.

If we want – GOD’S WISDOM

**1st – we’ve got to put our OWN WISDOM
Right where it belongs**

Which is . . . NO WHERE !

We’ve got to SEEK God’s Wisdom – With Genuine HUMILITY

This is a CRITICAL First Step !

God’s Wisdom – With OUR HUMILITY

Gives us PEACE - to NOT UNDERSTAND

The things that ONLY God CAN UNDERSTAND

& God’s Wisdom – With OUR HUMILITY

Gives us PEACE – to Handle the WRONGS

that we CANNOT Change

Here's an example – in ECCL 8:2-4

King's – During Bible times

Were often TYRANTS

& were often BRUTAL to the people

BUT – Look at how God's Wisdom - HANDLES

A situation that we would easily see as - WRONG

Ecclesiastes 8:2-4 (NLT)

*2 Obey the king (referring almost certainly to a Tyrant king) **since you vowed to God that you would.***

3 Don't try to avoid doing your duty, and don't stand with those who plot evil, for the king can do whatever he wants.

4 His command is backed by great power. No one can resist or question it.

Now - We don't have that many TYRANT KINGS

Directly impacting our lives

BUT – Maybe we have a BOSS

Who we FEEL is a TYRANT KING

Or – we may have a PASTOR

Who we FEEL is a TYRANT KING

& He MAY – or MAY NOT BE

But – Either Way

If God has placed you under that person → →

God's Wisdom says to us – In Humility:

OBEY the King – Because of your **COMMITMENT** to the Lord
DON'T try to AVOID your **Duty**
& DON'T STAND with those who **plot evil** against him

My Application – When things SEEM WRONG to us

DO what is RIGHT
LIVE in PEACE
TRUST GOD Completely

& **YOU CAN DO** what is **RIGHT**
when things are **WRONG** around you

But – it takes - **God's Wisdom – With our Genuine Humility** →

In order to Find a **way** – to **DO what is right**
Even when you **FEEL** things are **WRONG** all around you

Look at Ecclesiastes 8:5-6 (NLT)

5 Those who obey him (the tyrant king) will not be punished. Those who are wise will find a time and a way to do what is right,
6 for there is a time and a way for everything, even when a person is in trouble.

In this **WRONG situation**

We've **got to learn** – to **draw closer** to God – **IN HUMILITY**

& **BY DOING THAT** - we **can learn** - to **DO what is RIGHT**
& **TRUST GOD** with the **things** we **cannot change**

DO what is RIGHT
LIVE in PEACE
TRUST GOD Completely

The great SERENITY Prayer – CAPTURES God's Wisdom
in these matters – VERY WELL

***God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.***

Here – Is The REAL ROOT - Of The REAL PROBLEM

We HATE - things that We Perceive as WRONG
That we have NO CONTROL over

& there is SO MUCH – that happens in our Lives
That we have NO CONTROL over

We are a Culture – of CONTROL FREAKS

We Want to DO
WHAT we want
WHEN we want - &
HOW we want

& we Want things to BE – the way WE think they should BE

& Solomon wants us to Get a FIRM GRIP
on the Fact that

There ARE things in this life
that we CANNOT CONTROL

There ARE things in this life
that we CANNOT UNDERSTAND

& So - Solomon is going to use the BIGGEST, DARKEST
OUT-OF-OUR-CONTROL Event

In order to help us Come To Grips - with the fact
That some things - we just CANNOT CONTROL

Ecclesiastes 8:7-8 (NLT)

7 Indeed, how can people avoid what they don't know is going to happen? (that's out of our control)

8 (for example) None of us can hold back our spirit from departing. None of us has the power to prevent the day of our death. There is no escaping that obligation, that dark battle. And in the face of death, wickedness will certainly not rescue the wicked.

When it comes to Death

NONE of us - can KNOW it

NONE of us - can CONTROL it

& we MUST Learn to "Be At Peace" with that

So Now that Solomon has used DEATH

To CONVINCE US there are things in this life
That we have NO CONTROL over

Now – he'll go back to - "Rightly Handling Wrongs"

Ecclesiastes 8:9-10 (NLT)

9 I have thought deeply about all that goes on here under the sun, where people have the power to hurt each other.

10 I have seen wicked people buried with honor. Yet they were the very ones who frequented the Temple and are now praised in the same city where they committed their crimes! This, too, is meaningless. (senseless)

Solomon spent MUCH of his Life
Trying to Understand the "Wrongs of this life"

& (in v.10) he says – It is just WRONG

for Wicked people to be Buried with Honor
in the SAME City where they committed their crimes (*hurt others*)

This is SENSELESS – It's CRAZY

The WICKED are Buried with Great HONOR

Like maybe a Celebrity – or a Prominent "Wicked Person"

But the GOOD - Simple - Godly person

Is most often buried with No Fanfare - & No Earthly Honor

The Acts of LOVE & KINDNESS

of a Simple Godly Person - Just blow away with their Ashes

While the life of a “Prominent” Wicked Person
Is often Immortalized

& WE would say – “God, that’s NOT FAIR”

But . . . God is NOT asking us

We think we “Know Better” than God

But we made the MESS - we’re already living in

Only God knows - the END from the BEGINNING

Only God knows - the REWARDS & the CONSEQUENCES of this life

& that’s WHAT we SEE – in VS’S 11-14

Ecclesiastes 8:11-14 (NLT)

11 When a crime is not punished quickly, people feel it is safe to do wrong.

12 But even though a person sins a hundred times and still lives a long time, I know that those who FEAR GOD will be better off.

Do You BELIEVE THAT ??

13 The wicked will not prosper, for they do not FEAR GOD. Their days will never grow long like the evening shadows.

in V.14 See especially the words – “IN THIS LIFE” → →

14 And this is not all that is meaningless in our world. IN THIS LIFE, good people are often treated as though they were wicked, and wicked people are often treated as though they were good. This is so meaningless! (so senseless – IN THIS LIFE)

But – Look very carefully . . .

**V.12 - Even Tho a Wicked person lives
a Long & “Seemingly Good” Life here**

Solomon says - *I know that those who FEAR GOD will be better off*

Even Tho it SEEMS like the Wicked PROSPER

**V.13 says – *The wicked will not prosper,
for they do not FEAR GOD***

**Do you THINK you see - the Wicked Prospering?
*They will NOT Prosper - for they do not FEAR GOD***

**Do you THINK you see - the Godly NOT being better off?
*They WILL be Better Off – because they DO FEAR GOD***

**WAIT A MINUTE !! – Is it Possible - that
MAYBE – we are using the WRONG Measuring Device**

Are we measuring Prosperity

By what we can SEE

In this miniscule VAPOR of a Life?

IS THAT what we're **USING** to **determine** if **things** are **FAIR** ?

Are we Really Using - the amount of DUNG & KINDLING

That's being **Collected** for the **FIRE**

to **make** our **Determination** about **what** is **GOOD & FAIR** ??

We've GOT to STOP THAT - - - JUST STOP IT !!

We **CANNOT** Judge **PROSPERITY** & **FAIRNESS**

By the **same measurement** the **WORLD uses !**

God's Wisdom Views **ALL THINGS**

from an **ETERNAL** - **Heavenly** - **Perspective!!**

& God's Wisdom – When things **Seem WRONG** is:

DO what is RIGHT

LIVE in PEACE – **with Genuine HUMILITY**

TRUST GOD Completely

Which is the **SECRET** – to You **MOVING towards**

Having **CONTENTMENT** – **& JOY** - in this life

Which is Possibly – the **BIGGEST GOAL** of Ecclesiastes

To MOVE US Toward - **CONTENTMENT** - **& JOY**

In this **Life under the Sun**

So Now - Look at Vs 15

This is the FOURTH Time Solomon has said these Words

He keeps coming back – again & again

To THIS being the Answer

For us – Living Out our Days – Under the Sun

& I'm going to SWITCH to the ESV here

Because I want you to SEE the word – JOY - Very Clearly

Ecclesiastes 8:15 (ESV)

15 And I commend joy, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this (this joy) will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun.

Are there things you Can't Understand ? – YES

Are there things that Seem Wrong ? - YES

What is Solomon's COUNSEL ?

Solomon says – I commend JOY – there is nothing BETTER
in this life – than to BE CONTENT - & BE JOYFUL !

BE CONTENT with WHERE you ARE (as long as it's not in sin)

BE CONTENT with WHAT God has GIVEN you

& ENJOY each Day – As a Gift From God!

IF we will **LEARN This Wisdom** From **God**

Then – **CONTENTMENT** & **JOY** will **go with us**
thru all the **days** God has **given** us **under the sun**

[REPEAT “BE CONTENT” LIST]

Are things going to **CHANGE** ? – YES

Are things going to get **WORSE** ? – YES

Are things going to get **BETTER** ? – YES

CAN you **BE CONTENT**, & **JOYFUL**

THRU - ALL the **CHANGES**,
& **ALL** the **UPS & DOWNS** of this Life ?

YES, YES, YES, YOU CAN !!

But, Listen to me **pls**

There will **ALWAYS BE** - things in this life
That you **CANNOT Control**

There will **ALWAYS BE** - things in this life
That you **CANNOT Understand**

& **THAT** – is how **Solomon ENDS** this Ch → → →

FIRST – the **things** you **CANNOT CONTROL**

Ecclesiastes 8:16 (NLT)

16 In my search for wisdom and in my observation of people's burdens here on earth, I discovered that there is ceaseless activity, day and night.

There IS going to be **“Ceaseless Activity”** in your **Life**

Some Good - - **Some Bad**

& **Some Outside** your **Control**

AND - **there** are **going** to **be** things

You **CANNOT UNDERSTAND**

THAT is Ecclesiastes 8:17 (NLT)

17 I realized that no one can discover everything God is doing under the sun. Not even the wisest people discover everything, no matter what they claim.

Our lives – are going to include a HEALTHY DOSE

of **Things** we **CANNOT CONTROL**

& **Things** we **CANNOT UNDERSTAND**

We must **LEARN** – to **BE CONTENT**

& **ENJOY** Living this life – **AS God gives it**

Enjoying God's **BLESSINGS** as He **Gives** them

& **Enjoying** God's **PRESENCE** – in **Every Situation**

& - Did you hear me say – we must LEARN to be CONTENT

BY LEARNING - to Embrace GOD'S WISDOM
While Crucifying our OWN WISDOM

This is BEING TRANSFORMED
By the Renewing of our Minds !!

To Close – Listen Please
to the words of Paul the Apostle in Phil Ch 4

Philippians 4:11–13 – FROM THE (CSB)

11 . . . I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I find myself.

12 . . . In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content. . .

13 I am able to do all things through him who strengthens me.

When my brother starts listing - all that is WRONG in this world

My prayer for him – is the same as Solomon's prayer for us

That we would LEARN to BE CONTENT
& ENJOY each day as a Gift from God

WHILE – Rightly Handling The Wrongs

Let's Pray