

## Ecclesiastes 9:7-10 "With All Your Might"

### HAND OF GOD

The Bible uses the image of "the hand of God" to express God's **power, love, supervision, and control**. God really does have **"the whole world in his hands."** We know that the hand of God is a hand of love.

5 For the living know that they will die; **The positive side of Solomon's statement is** knowing that we will die gives us time to prepare for death, and also for eternity.

We all prepare for the future with life insurance, medical insurance, car insurance... Have you prepared for death?

Have you trusted in Jesus alone for the forgiveness of your sins?

Not only for salvation but I also think it is good to prepare for death in very practical ways.

**You should have a will or a trust.** Something with specific directions to determine what your wishes are in all areas before and after you are gone.

Ecclesiastes is not the kind of book that we keep reading until we reach the end and get the answer, like a mystery. Instead it is a book in which we keep struggling with the problems of life, and as we struggle, we learn to trust God with the questions even when we do not have all the answers.

Discipleship is a journey, and not merely a destination. **PRAY**

**Ecclesiastes 9:7** Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart; For God has already accepted your works. **His admonition "Go!" means: "Don't sit around and brood! Get up and live!" Yes, death is coming, but God gives us good gifts to enjoy so enjoy them! The word "go" conveys a sense of urgency. This statement is not descriptive but imperative.**

I don't think it is so much the eating and drinking that the Solomon is after, **but the**

## heartfelt joy.

This seems a little too positive for Solomon AKA Eore. This is a refreshing detour from his normal declarations that life is Vanity... chasing bubbles... what's the point? Yes he has positive side.




*As Ryken reminds us, “Solomon speaks to pleasure as well as to pain, especially in the so-called “enjoyment passages” of Ecclesiastes. At the end of chapter 2 he talked about eating and drinking (vv. 24-26). In the middle of chapter 3 he spoke about joyfully doing good as long as we live (vv. 12-13). In chapter 5 he explained how “good and fitting” it is for us to find enjoyment in our work, because this is our lot in life (v. 18). Then in chapter 8 he went farther and commended joy as a lifestyle (v. 15).*

These passages pose a major challenge in interpreting the book of Ecclesiastes because they seem to contradict what the Preacher says about the frustration of life under the sun. For this reason some commentators see them as ironic: when the Preacher tells us to enjoy life, he is speaking cynically or sarcastically. I don't believe that. Let's take a closer look.

My favorite word in Christianity? **BALANCE!** The enjoyment passages give us a balanced perspective. Yes, Solomon has a lot to say about vanity and striving after wind. Yet it should not surprise us that he also has something to teach us about joy, *because this is the way life really is.* For all our difficulty and despair, there are also many things that we are able to enjoy. **AS ONE MAN SAYS, “Life is bitter and sweet, and if we fail to perceive both of these tastes, we fail to experience life as it actually should be lived.”**

A balanced view understands that life will provide as much sorrow as it does joy. According to Martin Luther, the Solomon of Ecclesiastes *“is not urging a life of pleasure and luxury characteristic of those who do not sense this vanity, for that would be putting oil on fire; but he is speaking of godly men, who sense the vexation and troubles of the world. It is their downcast hearts that he wants to encourage.”*

 Remember each **“enjoyment passage”** puts God in the center. If God is not in the center that the enjoyment has no eternal value and borders on hedonism.

Hughes notes, “This immediately distinguishes Ecclesiastes from ancient writings

like The Epic of Gilgamesh. Why should we enjoy eating and drinking and working? In chapter 2 it is because these activities come “from the hand of God” (v. 24). In chapter 3 it is because these activities are “God’s gift to man” (v. 13). The same is true in chapter 5, which also says that God keep us “occupied with joy” in our hearts (v. 20). The Preacher may be frustrated with life in this fallen world, but he still acknowledges the gifts that come from the hand of God.”

***One caveat is that Solomon would never give us a blanket statement covering all things that are enjoyed; as God NEVER approves of wickedness.***

**Join me now in verse 8** Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil. As Eaton notes, "*White garments and anointing oil make life more comfortable in a hot climate.*" But more than that...

White garments were the “**dress-up clothes**” of the ancient Near East. Many festive occasions were adorned with robes of white. They were worn by war heroes in a victory parade, **by slaves on the day they gained their freedom, and by priests on the high holy days of Israel.** To put this into a contemporary context, Solomon is telling us to put on tuxedos and evening gowns because it’s time to enjoy.

- And let your head lack no **OIL!!!** put on the best perfume and cologne...
- This is an important part of getting ready for a celebration – not just looking good but **smelling good**, especially in hot climates.

**ENJOY THE PLEASURES GOD HAS GIVEN US.** This past week alone I enjoyed the pleasure of picking my wife up from a week away caring for her best friend in Washington.

I so enjoyed dinner with my daughter at PF Changs... ***I so enjoying skeet shooting with a dear brother from the Church...*** I enjoyed the beauty of our wonderful weather... ***I so enjoyed my friendship with my fellow pastors on staff here...*** I enjoyed the chicken and dumplings my wife made... ***I even enjoyed the 12 vials of blood taken from me for I know how fortunate I am to have health insurance.***

Every earthly joy is the foretaste of a better life to come, in the Paradise where God has promised us pleasures forevermore ***Psalm 16:11*** You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are*

pleasures forevermore.

9 Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that *is* your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.

“I’m going to live joyfully with you dear all the days of my worthless, meaningless life.” This is hardly the kind of statement that a woman is hoping for find written on her anniversary card! The Preacher is no more sentimental about marriage than he is about anything else in life. **But this does not make him a cynic.** On the contrary, he is giving a serious view of life that makes room for joy but also faces up to the sober realities of life in a fallen world and the inevitable reality of death.

**In this particular context he is not saying that life is meaningless but rather that life is short.**

**YOUR MATE IS NOT YOUR ENEMY** *Seek to understand... not to be understood*

**Believe in the good will of your mate. Believe they did not mean to hurt you.**

*Don't go to bed angry... Spoil each other... Never yell at each other unless the house is on fire!*

**OFFER MANY SIMPLE "THANK YOU'S"... learn to say I'm sorry!**

*Introduce your mate with genuine honor... "I am so glad you are home"*

**LAUGH TOGETHER... Give gifts... GO ON DATES TOGETHER**

Don't go to bed angry/bring peace before you sleep

★ Never undermine your marriage with words of fear “Fine just leave”, “Maybe you

married the wrong person”. “I don’t love you anymore”.

Divorce is not an option so choose joy and “Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days”

Husbands **BEAR** with your wives, don’t be a **BEAR** with your wives.

 **THE PREACHER IS COMMENDING THE DAILY PLEASURES OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE. SO ENJOY YOUR WIFE BECAUSE LIFE IS REALLY SHORT.**

When God is our King all we do can be an enjoyment... even work. Solomon ends verse 9 with “and in the labor which you perform under the sun”.

One man notes, “The phrase “under the sun” does not refer to backbreaking labor in the heat of the day but to the regular calling of our earthly existence – whatever God has called you to do. Whether we labor in law or science or education or construction or medicine or ministry of the arts (or in all of these areas through the calling of homemaking), God has given us the good work to do. As the Preacher has said before, this work is a gift from God that we should enjoy as long as we can.

10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with your might; for *there is* no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

He simply is saying that we are all going to die and that when we do, it will be the end of our work on earth, the end of everything we know about what is happening in the world, and the end of all our earthly pleasures.

**The N.T. counterpunch is found in Colossians 3:17** And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

(Spurgeon) "Man was not created to be idle, he was not elected




to be idle, he was not redeemed to be idle, he was not quickened  
to be idle, and he is not sanctified by God's grace to be idle."

Not just what to do but **how to do it**: Solomon says do it "with all our might."  
(Wholeheartedly)

*Let's put some flesh on these bones...*

His name was Caleb... One of the greatest honors of my life was to be able to name Pastor Mike and Brenda Pallotto's first child... My two favorite character's in God's word are Caleb and Joshua... that's what I named him Caleb Joshua!

**CALEB WAS AS STRONG AT 85 AS WHEN HE WAS 40 . . .**  
**What made this guy so great?**

In the desert he kept his eyes of the promise land... we are in the desert and the promise land is coming.

Remember he asked for the roughest and toughest land Hebron. Give me the land with their best warriors. Abraham, Issac, Sarah and Rebecca were buried there.

Nephilim... giants not only did he take the hardest hill in the land he is the only one who completed his assignment... the others did not expel the enemies from the land and the Jews suffer until this day.

**Numbers 14:30** Except for Caleb and Joshua, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in.

**Numbers 14:38** But Joshua and Caleb remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land.

*Ok, ok Caleb was great, what made him great?* **Numbers 32:12** Caleb and Joshua, they have wholeheartedly followed the Lord.

**Deut. 1:36** except Caleb; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am

giving the land on which he walked, because he wholeheartedly followed the Lord.'

**NUMBERS 14:24 NIV READS...** But because my servant Caleb has a **different spirit** and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.

That's what made Caleb so great.. **A DIFFERENT SPIRIT AND FOLLOWS ME WHOLEHEARTEDLY . . .**

**What is a different spirit?** Logic dictates that it is a spirit that most if not all others didn't have... certainly not the other 10 spies.

**Gill in his commentary...** A spirit of faith, fear of God, courage and might, truth and faithfulness, believing in the promise of God

**Heredity vs. environment?** Is it something you are born with? I mean spiritually or does it grow in environment. **Is it something only meant for a few?** I think it's available to us all!

Did they have a different spirit because they served the Lord wholeheartedly or did they serve the Lord wholeheartedly because they had a different Spirit? What came first the chicken or the egg... service because of wholeheartedness or wholeheartedness because of service?

All I know is I want different Spirit and to serve wholeheartedly!

**What does it mean to serve wholeheartedly?** Wholeheartedly is not half/hearted... ever do something half hearted?



He succeeded where all the others failed because he had a different spirit and served the Lord wholeheartedly... If you going to do something do it right... don't do it half/heartedly. Give it your best!

6 times out of 30 times Caleb is mentioned... God's words says, "He served the Lord wholeheartedly." Give Jesus your all... give Him your very best. **Full surrender... full tilt!** Solomon is saying... if your gonna do it, do it right for time is short and nothing can be done once your dead.

10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with your might; for *there is* no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.