

SEPT 4
2022

REALITY CHECK

Discovering life's meaning
in the book of Ecclesiastes
WEEK 5



The Way of the World

Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns. Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin. Deuteronomy 24:14-15

Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God. Proverbs 14:31

Ecclesiastes 4:1-13 *How Oppression Feels*

Again I **looked and saw** all the oppression that was taking place **under the sun**: I saw the tears of the oppressed—and they have no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors—and they have no comforter. And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive. But **better** than both is the one who has never been born, who has not seen the evil that is done **under the sun**.

Is it better to determine life's value by our joy or our suffering?

Ecclesiastes 4:4-6 *Unhealthy Competition*

And I **saw** that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

- Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves.
- **Better** one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.

Again I **saw** something meaningless under the sun: There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless— a miserable business!

"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

~ Jesus Luke 12:15

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 *Ya Gotta Have Friends*

- Two are **better** than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.
- Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?
- Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
- A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.

With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them.

For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.

Acts 4:32-35