

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS – The Benefits of Wisdom

July 13-14, 2024

Ecclesiastes 7:1-6 (NIV) – “A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth. It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart. Frustration is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of pleasure. It is better to heed the rebuke of a wise person than to listen to the song of fools. Like the crackling of thorns under the pot, so is the laughter of fools. This too is meaningless”.

“Because the Bible is filled with the perfect wisdom of God, we should expect verses that surprise us” – ***Mitchell Chase***

“Before ever a child speaks, he prophesies, by his tears, of his ensuing sorrows” – John Trapp

Philippians 1:21-24 (NIV) – “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body”.

“Death is the end of dying. On the day of the believer’s death, dying is forever done with. The saints who are with God shall never die anymore. Life is wrestling, struggling; but death is the end of conflict; it is rest-victory”
– ***Charles Spurgeon***

*Go back to Ecclesiastes 7:1-6 slide

Psalm 90:12 (NKJV) – “So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom”.

Psalm 90:12 (NLT) - “Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom”.

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Ecclesiastes 7:7-12 (NIV) – “Extortion turns a wise person into a fool, and a bribe corrupts the heart. The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride. Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools. Do not say, ‘Why were the old days better than these?’ For it is not wise to ask such questions. Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun. Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it”.

1 Kings 3:10-12 (NIV) - The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be”.

1 Kings 3:28 (NIV) – “When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice”.

Proverbs 1:7-9 (NIV) – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction and do not forsake your mother’s teaching. They are a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck”.

Genesis 11:4 (NIV) – Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth”.

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Ecclesiastes 7:13-20 (NIV) – “Consider what God has done: Who can straighten what He has made crooked? When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about their future. In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these: the righteous perishing in their righteousness, and the wicked living in their wickedness. Do not be over-righteous, neither be over-wise – why destroy yourself? Do not be over-wicked, and do not be a fool – why die before your time? It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes. Wisdom makes one wise person more powerful than ten rulers in a city. Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins”.

“Why do bad things happen to good people? That only happened once, and He volunteered” – **R.C. Sproul**

James 4:13-17 (NIV) – “Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money’. Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that’. As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them”.

Ecclesiastes 7:25-26, 29 (NIV) – “So I turned my mind to understand, to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things and to understand the stupidity of wickedness and the madness of folly. I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap and whose hands are chains. The man who pleases God will escape her, but the sinner she will ensnare” – “This only have I found: God created mankind upright, but they have gone in search of many schemes”.

“He was created neither sinful, nor neutral, but upright, a word used of the state of the heart which is disposed to faithfulness and obedience” – **Michael Eaton**