

My perspective follows.

“This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. ²⁰ For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart” (Ecclesiastes 5:16-20).

I’m sure you’ve heard the saying that goes, “you can’t take it with you.” I believe it was the late Billy Graham who said, “I’ve yet to see a hearse pulling a U-Haul trailer.”

How much of our lives is spent pursuing material things?

Those passages from Ecclesiastes suggest that a life spent pursuing material goods make as much sense as spending your life trying to capture the wind. If you don’t agree with this, the next time you’re in the wind, open a glass jar and trap some of the wind inside it. Then, go inside, and open the jar and see if you feel that wind. Such pursuits are a “grievous evil” the passages tell us.

How many cases have you seen where someone spent their life pursuing wealth only to see the later generations being the ones to spend it? In both cases, wealth does not produce the happiness the pursuer had in mind.

Happiness for the wealthy, and happiness for rest of us, comes from only one place: God. Human enjoyment, regardless of your finances, comes as a share from God and to whom God has given it.

In Ecclesiastes 5:20, the author makes two observations about happy people. First, they rarely engage in nostalgia (I struggle with this). Second, God enables them to live in the moment.

Stay in the Word daily, it will save your life.

-Travis Voeltz

