

Ecclesiastes

Chapter 5

5.1-2 We come before God in humility, recognizing his majesty and his right to our lives. We seek his guidance and listen to his words. The alternative is to suppose that offerings can be a substitute for a God-ordered life. There may be an attempt to bribe God. Sometimes extreme concern over one issue is an unconscious screen against facing other issues. It is as though we call God's attention to the sacrifice we are making while being blind to some essential command that he makes. Thus we often find it easier to make sacrificial efforts to demonstrate against some evil in far distant lands than to face evil here at home and in our own lives. ~ *J. Stafford Wright (cf. Luke 18.9-14; Isa. 1.11-20)*

5.4 The Preacher wishes to keep people from uttering rash or meaningless words during the worship of God. ~ *ESV Study Bible (cf. James 3; Matt 6.7ff; Judges 11.29ff)*

“In prayer, it is better to have a heart without words, than words without a heart.”
~John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*

“Have you ever noticed that the secretary to a top executive never goes into his office without a note pad? She knows that she should always be ready for an assignment! ~ *Chuck Missler*

5.10 Struggle for power comes from the desire for more and more money. It is not wrong to have a proper concern for a living wage, but the prestige of perquisites and greed for luxuries make this verse as relevant as ever. These insatiable desires also bring frustration. Not money itself, but a love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim 6.10). ~ *J. Stafford Wright*

“The person who loves money cannot be satisfied no matter how much is in the bank account—because the human heart was made to be satisfied only by God. ~ *Chuck Missler*

“At the age of fifty-three, John D. Rockefeller was the world's only billionaire, earning about a million dollars a week. But he was a sick man who lived on crackers and milk and could not sleep because of worry. When he started giving his money away, his health changed radically and he lived to celebrate his ninety-eighth birthday! Yes, it's good to have the things that money can buy, provided you don't lose the things that money can't buy.” ~ *Chuck Missler*

5.20 The ideal for the man of God is that he not brood over the past or worry about the future; for God fills his heart with joy. ~ *J. Stafford Wright (cf. Philippians 4.4-7; Matt 6.33)*

“The important thing is that we love the Lord, accept the lot He assigns us, and enjoy the blessings He graciously bestows. If we focus more on the gifts than on the Giver, we are guilty of idolatry. If we accept His gifts, but complain about them, we are guilty of ingratitude. If we hoard His gifts and will not share them with others, we are guilty of indulgence. But if we yield to His will and use what He gives us for His glory, then we can enjoy life and be satisfied.” ~ *C. Missler*

Chapter 6

“More than one person in the Bible became so discouraged with life that he either wanted to die or wished he had never been born....¹ In Ecclesiastes 6, Solomon discussed three of life’s mysteries: Riches without enjoyment (vv. 1-6); labor without satisfaction (vv. 7-9); and questions without answers (vv. 10-12).” ~ *C.M.*

6.1-2 There is an obvious contrast between the wording of 5.19 and 6.2.... It seems that 5.19 describes the person who accepts a standard of living for which he has worked, without continually craving for more (*cf.* 5.10, 6.9). The man in 6.2 is more concerned with having everything he wants.... But inasmuch as his heart is centered on his accumulated wealth, his tragedy comes when God allows this wealth to be taken over by a stranger. ~ *J. Stafford Wright*

6.3-6 In the Old Testament Era, long life and numerous children were considered some of the highest of all earthly blessings. ~ *ESV Study Bible (cf. Psalm 127)*

“The ability to enjoy life comes from within. It is a matter of character and not circumstances.” ~ *Chuck Missler (cf. Philippians 4.11b)*

“A Century ago, when the United States was starting to experience prosperity and expansion, the American naturalist Henry David Thoreau warned that men were devising ‘improved means to unimproved ends.’” ~ *Chuck Missler*

6.10-11 God is the one who has already named all things. To “name” something is to exercise authority over it (Gen. 2.19-20). The Preacher thus confesses that God rules over all things, and he points out that it would be foolish for mankind to dispute with God’s sovereign ordering of the world; to do so would only produce more words and more vanity. ~ *ESV Study Bible*

¹ Moses (Num 11.15); Elijah (1 Kgs 19.4); Job (3.21; 7.15); Jeremiah (8.3; 15.10); Jonah (4.3); Paul (2 Cor 1.8-11).