

You Better Wise Up | Week 5: "Searching For Satisfaction"

Ecclesiastes 6:1-9

1. Where we've been...

1. **Week 1: Rather than attempt to gain leverage on the world, trust God (Ecclesiastes 1-2).**
2. **Week 2: Trust God that everything in our lives fits into his plan (Ecclesiastes 3).**
3. **Week 3: We need godly community to navigate this world (Ecclesiastes 4).**
4. **Week 4: We must respect God and his people (Ecclesiastes 5).**

2. Michael Jordan: Need to dominate -- STILL needs adversaries to suffer

3. **Other examples:** Increasingly sordid sexual gratification; Harder the drugs; larger the wardrobes; lots of FB likes...

4. Text - Ecclesiastes 6:1-10 - Solomon's explanation

1 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on mankind:

2 a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous evil.

- "Grievous evil"= Can't enjoy God's gifts
 - All the things accumulated over a lifetime end up in a garage sale or fought over by relatives
 - The "grievous evil" is the inability to *enjoy* God's gifts
- Why would God give wealth, possessions, and honor to people and withhold the power to enjoy those things?
- Another question: Why do we need *power* to enjoy things? What *powers* resist us? What force keeps us from enjoying God's gifts?
- Solomon answers these questions...

3 If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he.

- Many children were considered a great blessing to the ancients
- **The problem is a lack of perspective, not a lack of wealth**, possessions, and honor.
- A disparity of discernment
- It's when the affluence of our outside is surpassed by the poverty within.
- A painful metaphor for some of us here --> This is why a stillborn child who has never tasted affluence, nor any good thing, is better off than the wealthy and powerful who have every good thing but aren't satisfied.
- I Timothy 6:17-19:
 - Context: A charge to Timothy and his congregation to faithfully keep watch over their loyalty to Jesus; to avoid becoming stained by this world...
 - *17 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.*
 - *Practices* to employ in our lives
 - We are ALL affluent compared to these people
- Another fact we must face: **Wealth isn't always a blessing from God.**

4 For it [stillborn child] comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and in darkness its name is covered.

5 Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything, yet it finds rest rather than he.

6 Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good-do not all go to the one place?

7 All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied.

- One commentator: "**Better to miscarry at birth than to miscarry through life.**"¹
- Working to fill our mouths, yet we remain hungry

8 For what advantage has the wise man over the fool? And what does the poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living?

9 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the appetite: this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

- Better to be content with what we see in front of us - what we have - rather than a relentless appetite for what we don't yet possess.

5. Challenge - Fear God

1. Dilemma:

1. So how do we enjoy God's gifts without turning those gifts into gods themselves?

2. How do we remain content when so many around us have more?

2. Recognize that all this is a matter of perspective. Discernment. That the problem you face isn't *outside* of yourself -- it's inside.

1. **People with more stuff don't have access to more satisfaction than you do.**

2. **If you have more than the average person, don't think that you are more blessed than somebody who has less than you.**

3. **Whether you conceive of yourself as having little or having much, fear God. Enjoy God's blessings, but be satisfied in him alone.**

The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. - Ecclesiastes 12:13

¹ Eaton, Michael A. Ecclesiastes. The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. 106.