

DESPERATELY SEEKING SATISFACTION (ECCL.6:7-12) WHISKEY, JOSHUA

EXORDIUM TO ECCLESIASTES 6:7-12 2158

It is indeed a Great Privilege to stand before us today to discuss on issues that Matters. Life has a beautiful way of Bringing things New to us every time when we must experience such a thing in the past before. I really want to Thank Our Beloved Minister for doing justice to the Previous text before Mine. He made us understand the Futility of Life and How a Man's labor be enjoyed by another who doesn't know the Origin of the Wealth. He also talked Even when a Man has hundreds of children and is not satisfied with good things and also not given a proper burial that better that he was not Born at the First. But While we think on those verses of last week, this week we are going to be taking the narratives further.

Outline:

- 1. Riches in of themselves cannot satisfy the soul – Eccl. 6:7-9**
 - a. Body Filled but the Soul Empty
 - b. Better than what you've seen, than that you have not.
- 2. Riches really can't change things – Eccl. 6:10-11**
 - a. He is still "man", and cannot contend with God
 - b. They are not the things that truly make man better, they only increase vanity
- 3. The answers to life's questions can't be found in striving for riches – Eccl. 6:12**

RICHERS IN OF THEMSELVES CANNOT SATISFY THE SOUL - ECC 6:7-9

A. Body Filled and Soul Empty:

Solomon says that we all work so that we can eat. When you boil it down, whether you're a high-profile CEO of a Fortune 500 company or you're a college student working part-time for Burger King, you essentially work for food. You just work for your next meal. It's sad but true. Think about it: Have you ever developed a hunger for a particularly appetizing dish? And then you ate it. And by the next day, no matter how good the meal was, you were hungry again. There is a curious repetition of hunger. It doesn't matter how well you ate yesterday, tomorrow you will be hungry again. A man works and works to buy food, but it's never enough. He has to keep

working because he continually gets hungry and needs to eat. Wealth will never satisfy you. It will never scratch your itch deep enough.

“All a man’s labor is for his mouth and yet the appetite is not satisfied. For what advantage does the wise man have over the fool? What advantage does the poor man have, knowing how to walk before the living? What the eyes see is better than what the soul desires. This too is futility and a striving after wind.”

Interestingly, the Hebrew word translated **“appetite”** is nephesh, which means “soul.” We find it in the verse describing the creation of Adam: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” So Our body can be filled but our Soul is empty because that’s not what the Soul needs.

Two thoughts come to mind. The first is Moses’ statement: “Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.” Leaving God out of the picture and concentrating exclusively on the satisfaction of physical appetites will leave the human soul(appetite) empty. Only God can fill our deepest longings.

The second important truth is that joy is a fruit of obedience. Jesus said to His disciples: “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” If joy becomes the sole goal of life’s search it will never be found

ILLUSTRATION OF DESIRES THAT REMAINS UNFULFILLED.

While the immediate reference is to food, Solomon’s intention seems to speak to anything material (Prov 16:26). Whatever it is that you pick to attempt to satisfy your soul will eventually be found to be lacking. Or to put it another way, stuff doesn’t satisfy. Why not? Because physical things can only satisfy physical needs, and that for which you hunger on the inside is a hunger of the soul. This is seen vividly in the Hebrew text of this verse. The word translated “appetite” (nephesh) in 6:7 is the same word translated “soul” in 6:2 and 3. Satisfaction in life is found by enjoying God’s blessings.

B. BETTER THAN WHAT YOU’VE SEEN, THAN THAT YOU HAVE NOT.

In 6:8 Solomon states, regardless of who you are (wise or poor) there is no ultimate satisfaction in this life unless you enjoy it. This leads to 6:9 which suggests, use what is available instead of yearning for that which is beyond you. Solomon’s proverb is

similar to the more familiar, “A bird in the hand is worth more than two in the bush” (Prov 17:24). A roving appetite is not satisfied with what is at hand; it impatiently looks for something new, something better. Generally speaking, actually having something that you want (and is good for you) is better than merely wishing you had that same thing. What do your eyes see when they look at your life? Are your eyes satisfied or is your life lived around what the soul desires? Always more, always what you do not have; living for the future potential of filet mignon, and not enjoying the spam burger you have on your plate today.

There's this thing about Happy Meal that people talk about in the United States and people usually get excited going to the McDonalds shop to get their meals and in there; other Parents are seriously looking for parents who would deny their kids the Happy Meal. But the sad thing about the Happy Meal is that the happy always wears off, and they need a new fix. And according to John Ortberg He says “When you get older, you don't get any smarter; your happy meals just get more expensive. Yet, we must always remember satisfaction in life is found by enjoying God's blessings.

God's Blessings

1. The Gift of Life.
2. The Material and Non-Material Things
3. The Mysterious Nature of Life.
4. God's Presence and Love for us.

2. RICHES REALLY CAN'T CHANGE THINGS – ECCL. 6:10-11

Going further according to our passage it reads ***“Whatever exists has already been named, and it is known what man is; for he cannot dispute with him who is stronger than he is. For there are many words which increase futility. What then is the advantage to a man? For who knows what is good for a man during his lifetime, during the few years of his futile life? He will spend them like a shadow. For who can tell a man what will be after him under the sun?”***

Throughout the book of Ecclesiastes, there are numerous allusions to Genesis. Solomon loved to draw upon the book of beginnings. This text is held together by the fourfold use of the catchword “man” (adam), here used not merely as a generic term for human beings but as a term that points back to Genesis 2-3. Ecclesiastes 6:10 (***“Whatever exists has already been named”***) does not refer to the divine naming of all things at creation; it is a literary allusion to Adam's naming of all living things in Gen 2:19. The noun Adam looks back to the substance from which humanity came, the Adama (“soil”), and so draws attention to human mortality.

A. He Is Still “Man”, And Cannot Contend With God

The participle “known” alludes to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the place at which Adam discovered that he could not contend with God and win. Adam contended with one “stronger” than he in an attempt to become “like God, knowing good and evil” (**Gen. 3:5**). Adam was in effect the first “Teacher.” He sought an encyclopedic mastery of knowledge (cf. **Eccl. 1:13**) and even experimented with firsthand experience in good and evil (cf. **Eccl. 1:17**). What he discovered was his own mortality and weakness before God. That is, he discovered the real meaning of his own name. Indeed, more exhaustive attempts at explaining the human situation only confound the facts and are of no benefit to humanity (6:11). Adam has already shown us what we are. The question in 6:12: “For who knows what is good” for Adam, plays on the situation of Adam prior to the fall. The trees had “good” fruit, and the land had “good” gold (**Gen. 2:9, 12**). It also plays on the name of the tree of his demise, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Adam’s days, though they numbered 930 years (Gen 5:5), passed like a shadow and no one could tell him what was to follow him. What is true of him is equally true of all who bear his name. We are but weak mortals

Therefore, we need to learn to be submissive to our great God, for He alone knows the end from the beginning. He is the only sovereign. God is the potter; we are the clay. More arguing only results in more futility for man (6:11). Man does not know what is best for him or what his future holds completely (6:12). We are ignorant of our place in God’s all-inclusive plan. Human life is fleeting, it is like a shadow. It is futile to fight with God; He always wins. James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) said it well, “Your arms are too short to box with God.” Sure or as C.S. Lewis said, “To argue with God is to argue with the very power that makes it possible to argue at all.” Disputing is a waste of time and effort. So long as I fight the hand of God, I do not learn the lessons He is attempting to place before me. When I find myself getting anxious about my life, it is usually because the horizontal has overshadowed the vertical. I have momentarily lost sight of who is still on the throne (1898-1963).

B. THEY ARE NOT THE THINGS THAT TRULY MAKE MAN BETTER, THEY ONLY INCREASE VANITY

Notice there are two questions introduced with “who” in 6:11 and 12. Solomon is implying that there is a “who” who holds the universe and its philosophical questions. He is leading us to the conclusion that satisfaction in life is found by enjoying God’s blessings. A wealthy man called Ray Charles was once baited by a 60 Minutes interviewer with a question about the inequity between his earnings and those of white entertainers. The question any man who was greedy and his reply was “I make a good living. I can only ride in one car at a time, I live in one house at a time, sleep

with one woman at a time.” (I trust it was his wife.) Ray was right, and he was also content.

According to Keith R. Krell he shared his experience of whenever it's time to serve his children meal they would always request for more before they even begun consume what was served. His response always was always the same. “Before I give more, you need to eat what you have.” In the same way, before we can expect God to give us more gifts, we must enjoy what we have (1960).

Do you enjoy your life? Are you satisfied with your life? Do you enjoy your spouse, your kids, your work, and your church? If not, pray to God that He will change your perspective. Tragically, you may have believed a lie that you can be and do whatever you want. Is that true? It is obvious that not everybody was join the basketball team. There are things we can't get in this life even when we pray to God. Not that God cannot give it to us but God is calling on us to be Happy with What we have not like that of the Happy that there isn't any Happiness inside the Meal.

Humans are indeed limited in their abilities to do things even when they try to deny such reality. At a certain point in our lives we must come to terms that we are limited in the things we do or achieve. These limitations are not meant to hold us back but to guide us towards a path where true contentment and satisfaction lie. We are shaped by our limits, and they serve as a compass to navigate the complexities of life.

Affirmation: There are certain things that I simply cannot do. I am limited by God in some areas and blessed by Him in other areas. Yet, here's what I can do: I can be satisfied with my wife, my kids, my ministry, because God has enabled me to be satisfied with all those things. Without His enabling me to be satisfied, I would never fully enjoy anything. But when I look beyond this world to the God who knows me and loves me, I find true and lasting satisfaction.

Summation