

THE ESSENTIALITY OF CHARITY ENJOINED

ECCLESIASTES 11:1- 8

BRO. SUNDAY EYANRIN (EVANGELIST)

In continuation of our study of the Book of ECCLESIASTES, last week our Minister Bro. E. Adeoye took us through chapter:10:11- 20 , ON THE TOPIC:
THE BABBLING TALK OF THE FOOLISH.

He emphasized greatly on the foolishness of man. Using the Serpent as an example, he declared.

Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babbler is no better. The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious: but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

He further pointed out four Characteristics of the words of a fool.

1. They are DESTRUCTIVE.
2. They are UNREASONABLE.
3. They are UNCONTROLLED.
4. They are BOASTFUL.

Finally, he admonish us to flee from foolishness, we can be diligent and sensible.

Today, we shall be looking at the 11th Chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes On the Topic: THE ESSENTIALITY OF CHARITY ENJOINED - **ECCL.11:1 - 8.**

Introduction

For a more better and clearer understanding of this message, we will classify the message into two sub – headings.

1. VERSE:1-6: FIVE SECRETS TO A PRODUCTIVE LIFE- EXERCISING OPPORTUNISTIC FAITH.

To achieve the secrets to a productive life: We need balance in our lives. Some people concentrate so much on being productive and achieving something ... they seem to have no enjoyment of life. Others are so consumed with enjoying life that they seem to waste opportunities to invest in being productive for God's Kingdom. God has designed our lives to be both productive and enjoyable.

(1) It is important to Aggressively Invest Your Resources for the Widest Possible Blessing – Expecting Your Generous, Sacrificial Investment to Yield Unexpected Dividends – Trust God to reward you / The way to Reap is to Sow Aggressively. Strategically Bless as Many People as Possible - *“Cast your bread on the surface of the waters”*.

Bread = that which has value to you and others; that which provides sustenance; instead of hoarding it for yourself and making sure you have enough security and provision for your later years ... invest it in ways where you must trust God for the results – Pragmatic person would respond: *“You will never see that bread again; it’s gone forever!”*

Let us consider other alternatives on this issue:

❖ **The Agrarian society:**

Speaking of sowing and reaping:

In an agrarian society, seeds speak a different language to the people. To the sower, the seed gives hope of a bountiful harvest, whilst to the farmer’s wife, the seed can be processed into bread for food today. One can sow the seed or use it to make bread, but one cannot do both with the same seed.

❖ **Commerce:- Shipping Of Goods**

Solomon describes the risks taken by merchants in his day. They would “cast their bread upon the waters.” That is, they would put their merchandise on boats to be shipped to foreign ports, hoping for a profitable return “after many days.” Do they consider the risk involved?

- In Solomon’s day, an awful lot of ships wrecked happened. Merchants often loss their goods.
- Pirates frequented the seas. Cargo are stolen.
- There weren’t any insurance policies to cover such losses

The question is Why would merchants take these risks?
Because the reward was great!

By using this illustration Solomon is encouraging his readers to be risk takers. Not only does this scripture encourage us to be risk takers – but it encourages us to be high-risk takers!

Solomon used two activities to illustrate his point [life is an adventure that must be lived by faith]: the merchant sending out his ships (vv. 1-2) and the farmer sowing his seed (vv. 3-6). In both activities, a great deal of faith is required, because neither the merchant nor the farmer can control the circumstances.

The ships might hit a reef, meet a storm, or be attacked by pirates and the cargo lost. Bad weather, blight, or insects might destroy the crop, and the farmer's labor would be in vain. However, if the merchant and the farmer waited until the circumstances were ideal, they would never get anything done! Life has a certain amount of risk to it, and that's where faith comes in. Patiently wait for God to Bear the Fruit *"for you will find it after many days."*

The Counsel from Solomon is Strategically Spread Your Resources in a Number of Key Directions;

"Divide your portion to seven, or even to eight,"

Seven = number of perfections of completion; even go beyond and divide your portion to eight. It would be presumptuous to put all of your eggs into one basket; invest wisely. Misfortune May Hit Where You Least Expect It, *"for you do not know when misfortune may occur on the earth."*

You give now to others because you have abundance and they have need; what about when misfortune strikes you; who will come to your aid? – key passages - **2 Cor. 8:7-15; 9:10-11**. Certain Obstacles are Inevitable – Deal with Them. *"If the clouds are full, they pour out rain upon the earth;"*

The blessing of rain is essential for the harvest – you can expect it ... but no guarantees ... Deal with the hand that is dealt you. You can't be overly cautious and try to put off work because of your guesses about the weather ... do what is in your power when you have opportunity.

Isolated and Unpredicted Events **Wind knocks down trees**

"And whether a tree falls toward the south or toward the north, wherever the tree falls, there it lies." Again, deal with unexpected circumstances that are out of your control and move on. Use your opportunities now ... once your tree has fallen, no more chance to change direction – speaking of being saved or not] it is God who controls the fall of the tree out in the forest.

whether it falls to the south or the north is within the scope of God's divine providence to determine, but where it falls, that is where it is to be. This is Solomon's way of saying to us, "Where God has put you, in your present circumstances, that is where you should be. . Don't Let Future Uncertainties Rob You of Present Productivity. Sow while there is opportunity *"He who watches the wind will not sow"* - **Hag. 1:2**. Reap while there is opportunity *"and he who looks at the clouds will not reap."*

We must trust God to work for us.

“Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things.” How does God create a new life, ... How do the bones form and grow? : God’s Word is powerful; your labor is not in vain in the Lord; we can’t walk by sight .. but by faith; God is the one who creates life; God is the one who brings forth fruit .. He wants us to Abide in Him – not to have a comfortable, risk-free life ... but to bear fruit ... have a productive life ... and bear fruit abundantly.

Seize Every Opportunity for Productive Living – Give yourself every chance for success; don’t limit yourself by laziness or procrastination; leave the results in God’s hands – Trust God to bring forth fruit *“Sow your seed in the morning and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good.”*

Prepare for Death — by Counting Your Blessings Every Day

“Indeed, if a man should live many years, let him rejoice in them all, and let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. Everything that is to come will be futility.”

2. AS CHRISTIANS, WHAT IS OUR LEARNING POINT FROM ECCL.11:1 – 8

Ecclesiastes 11:1-8 - Deals with Living with the Unexplainable and Unexpected. There are many things in life we can't predict; don't let the unexpected events of life paralyze you with fear. There are a lot of mysteries too. But don't let the unexplainable mysteries of God's work in your life rob you of joy.

The first six verses contain a series of sayings about the uncertainty of human industry, and are held together by the fourfold occurrence of the expression *“thou knowest not”*. Although man cannot comprehend God's work, nor predict success, he needs to be involved in life's activities and trust God for the results.