

## *Ecclesiastes 8:1-17*

“Who *is* as the wise *man*? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man’s wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed. 2 I *counsel thee* to keep the king’s commandment, and *that* in regard of the oath of God. 3 Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. 4 Where the word of a king *is, there is* power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou? 5 Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man’s heart discerneth both time and judgment. 6 Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man *is* great upon him. 7 For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be. 8 *There is* no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither *hath he* power in the day of death: and *there is* no discharge in *that* war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it. 9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: *there is* a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt. 10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: *this is* also vanity. 11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. 12 Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: 13 but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong *his* days, *which are* as a shadow; because he feareth not before God. 14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just *men*, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked *men*, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also *is* vanity. 15 Then I commendeth mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than

to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun. 16 When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also *there is that* neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:) 17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it*: yea farther; though a wise *man* think to know *it*, yet shall he not be able to find *it*.”

*Introduction: Keep The King's Commandments*

“Ecclesiastes chapter 8, Solomon in the earlier chapters, put a template down further, he can never get God out of his equation, and that’s what troubles him throughout. It isn’t that what troubles him is that he doesn’t believe, what troubles him is that he does. And he sees inequity, he sees unfairness, he sees the wicked prospering, the righteous suffering, he sees man eeking out a living in his short span of life, and he’s asking himself **‘What’s the point of it all?’** I mean, he has everything, I mean he’s the guy who has experimented in every regard. He says, chapter 8, **“Who is as the wise *man*? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man’s wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.” (verse 1)** “the strength, the countenance of his face” and of course we think of Moses or Stephen, the light of God on the face. But he’s just saying someone who understands, someone who has wisdom, their attitude is different, the way they present themselves, their countenance, they’re not filled with doubt, there’s a certainty about them, there’s something wonderful. You know what it’s like to talk to somebody whose 85 years old, and he’s been walking with the Lord for 65 years, and they tell you about his love, and there’s something glistening in their eyes, a certainty, it makes their face shine, he says here, he’s taking note of that. So, he says **“I counsel thee to keep the king’s commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.” (verse 2)** he’s looking at civil government,

he himself being a king would certainly appreciate what he's saying. Those who were around the throne swore allegiance to the throne, and in ancient Israel they understood to a degree what the throne was. Look, wherever there are monarchies around the world today, there is tyranny usually, they're a despot. And there was much of that in Israel, certainly when the kingdom split, the northern [10] tribes didn't have one good king [some were better than others, but they were all bad in God's eyes]. But he also knows this is an institution of the LORD, there was no nepotism, you wanted to be a king you had to be a king's kid, there was a line, there was going to be the line of David. You weren't just swearing allegiance to the king himself, you were swearing allegiance to an institution of God, in there was another king coming through that line, God had made a promise to David. The counsel is to keep the king's commandments, and that in regard to the oath of God, understanding, you pledge your loyalty to the king, there is a spiritual side of that.

### *Don't Oppose The Civil Leadership*

He says **"Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him."** (verse 3) the idea is "persist not" don't be persistent in something that is contrary to the leadership that God has placed there, **"stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him."** **"Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"** (verse 4) i.e. *'who may say unto him, What'd you think you're doing?'* **"Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment."** (verse 5) King James says "time and judgment" which kind of indicates, and it can, temporal and eternal, the sense of it seems to be ***'the wise man's heart discerns the proper time and procedure of a thing, the way it's rolling out.'*** Look, Jesus himself, when he walked among us and being questioned by the Scribes about whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar, of course, came to them and said **"Render**

***unto God the things that are God's and render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.***” So when we hear things like Solomon is saying here, that we should be listening to a king, Paul will tell us in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy chapter 2, we'll be there if the Lord tarries, not in the distant future, he says that we should pray for those in authority, and the reason he says that, is so that we might lead peaceable lives, that we might have the freedom to share Christ in the culture that we're in. I've been several times to the Calvary Chapel in Zagan, in Germany, that's a socialist government, the church is thriving, it's on fire, it's wonderful to see what's happening there. I think we have to pray for those in authority. Paul said that when Nero was on the throne. It's when you want to pray imprecatory prayers at that point in time. He says, no, pray for him. He will say in ***Romans chapter 13***, he says ***'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, civil government, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power resists the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves judgment. Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Wilt thou not then be afraid of the power, the authority, governmental authority, do that which is good, that thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. If thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil, wherefore ye must be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.'*** So, there is order, there's authority, you walk in some measure of it, you have kids, you have a job, you have some measure of authority that you exercise, and you need to be subject to it. And believe me, whether we think much of about it or not, to the greater degree we are thankful that there is authority around us in the world that we live in, that there's some order. We see here the necessity of pledging a loyalty to the king, and certainly in our lives, that first is Jesus Christ. The loyalty that we pledge to that King supersedes any loyalty we have to a civil ruler. How do you know when we're not supposed to listen to the government? When the government tells us that can't do what you're supposed to do, what the Bible teaches, when

the government says you're supposed to do what the Bible says you're not to do, there comes a time. Because both Peter and Paul told the Church to be submitted unto and pray for the civil authorities that were in the world they lived in, and both Peter and Paul were slain, Paul beheaded, Peter crucified for not doing it. Because that point just came finally in their lives, when they were told not to preach the Gospel, not to share Christ, not to teach their kids the Gospel. Who knows what's going to come here, *'Don't teach creation, don't teach marriage is between a man and a woman, don't teach the Bible is inspired, don't teach Jesus is the only name given among men whereby you must be saved,'* who knows where this is going to go. Right now we have incredible freedom, incredible freedom. I guarantee you if those freedoms are taken away we'll complain a lot more about not having those freedoms than we are rejoicing right now in the fact that we do have those freedoms. And we should use them to the best of our abilities. We have sworn allegiance to a King also, our King of course is Jesus Christ. It says **"Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him."** **(verse 3)** now it's very interesting, Luke chapter 10 tells us that, Martha, she was fast to go out of his sight, Mary was sitting at his feet, and Martha was bugged, you know the story, that Mary wasn't *helping*, and ends up accusing not only Mary, but the Lord, ***'Don't you care, you let her get away with this, that Hippie, sitting out in the living room while there's work to be done.'*** And sadly, sometimes the service, the ministry, becomes lord over the Lord himself. And when people do that, and they're angry at other people who don't see it the way that they see it. And the Lord said ***'Hey look, she's chosen the better part, it's not going to be taken away from her.'*** Sometimes you know, you know, we get in ministry, and we want everybody to do it the way we do it, and we're 44, I'm sure you're all familiar with, when the Millennial reign of Christ is established, he says to the Levites, he says ***'Because you turned away from me [cf. Malachi chapters 1-3] and you served other gods and so forth, you're not going to draw close to me, you will stand in the Temple courts, you will stand before the people, you will sacrifice for them and you will serve them. But the house of Zadok, the***

**priests of Zadok, where they were loyal to me, they are going to be with me and minister to me.'** And it's a funny thing, in the church, a lot of people, all they want to do is get in front of the people. When God sets up his Kingdom, he says the lesser places is going out and standing in front of the people, the superior place he says **'is being alone with me in ministry.'** That's accessible to all of us tonight, the more superior place belongs to all of us tonight, to get home, get on our knees tonight before we go to bed, or sit somewhere in the dark, just get alone with him and talk to him and minister to him and thank him, you know, all of that is ours now. It says **"Be not hasty to go out of his sight:"** the King's sight, **"stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him."** the word of the King has this power, we understand all of this, because we're the children of the King. **"Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"** (verse 4) **"Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment."** (verse 5) there's a reason, **"Because to every purpose there is a time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him."** (verse 6) I know, if you have the NIV it says **"because to every purpose there is a time and a judgment, though the misery of man is great upon the earth."** The Hebrew actually says **"When the misery of man is great..."** it seems to be saying **'Even though there are great difficulties, even though there's brokenheartedness, the times we go through, very difficult things, still the purpose, the timing, the procedure and judgment of God is being executed,'**

### *There's No Escaping Death*

**"For he [man] knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?"** (verse 7) Man doesn't know what's coming down the pike, what's ahead of him, except this, in **verse 8, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are**

**given to it.”** now I know if you have the NIV or New American Standard [both of which have errors in translating the Hebrew] it says “breath” because “ruach” is both spirit and breath [in the Hebrew]. But our context here, speaking of death, and the spirit being released from the body, demands, the context is what tells us here, the translations I have, the transliterations, from Hebrew also say the “spirit” here. **“There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.”** (verse 8) So it seems to say, *‘Man doesn’t know what’s ahead of him, a wise man understands this, there’s authority, we go through life, we should be loyal to the authority, the powers that God has established in the world, we live in this context,’* and he says *‘even in the most difficult days, there’s still timing and judgment involved in those things, for man doesn’t know what’s going to be, he doesn’t know what’s coming after this, except this, the thing the haunts us, the human animal, our entire lives, is the perception of our own mortality.’* It’s funny, my dad, you know, just kind of healthy most of his whole life that I can remember. And I think he was shoveling snow, and he got out of breath, so he was 78, he was shoveling snow, and so he put the shovel down for awhile, then my mom yelled at him to go to the doctor, and the doctor said *‘What you do?’* and he said *‘I waited till I caught my breath and I finished shoveling the snow,’* and they put him on a treadmill, and in three minutes they had him in a bed in the hospital, for a triple bypass. And it’s funny, I was with him about two months later, and we were down somewhere in Kensington, some hardware store that were going to have this pipe and fitting that nobody else in the city was going to have, and we were driving back and tears running down his face, and I said *‘What’s up?’* and he said *‘I don’t know,’* he said *‘I never thought much about my mortality, I’ve been healthy my whole life,’* he said *‘becoming a member of this zipper club has put me in a different place.’* But the truth is, it hangs over all of us, it hangs over all of us. We’re kind of different, that’s why we get nipped and tucked, trying to keep our hair dark [what hair?], trying to keep our weight off, try to keep thin, try to keep young, get

our teeth replaced, but something's wearing away, something's wearing away. And there's no discharge in that war, there's no putting down the weapons in that war, there's no, nobody gets away from that. And by the way, I believe there's a wonderful side to it, man doesn't have any power over the spirit [what the Bible calls "the spirit in man" or "spirit of man," cf. Ecclesiastes 3:19-21; Ecclesiastes 12:7; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:9-13], the physical frame is going to die. The spirit then goes to be with the Lord. He can't retain the spirit, he doesn't have any power in the day of death. [for a description of what the "spirit of man" is, see the article about it titled "Soul vs. Spirit: What Is The Difference" at this [link: https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm](https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm)] And every man is subject to that, no human being has authority over that. That is something that rules over us our entire lives, realizing we are so frail. You see these shows on TV, somebody gets a fungus and dies, somebody gets a bacteria, you need to look in a microscope to see it, and they're gone. Somebody else falls out of the 13<sup>th</sup> story of a building, and they walk away. So nobody really knows. You may not know what's coming, but one thing we do know, this in one form or another, comes to all of us, and man has no ability in that day to retain the spirit, he doesn't have power over the day of death. And the struggle we have thinking through it, there is no discharge in that war. And **"neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it." (verse 8c)** don't get the wrong impression, people aren't getting it over on anybody, they're not getting away with anything.

### *You Reap What You Sow, Eventually*

Now here's the wisest man who ever lived, **"All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt." (verse 9)** he says, **'I sit around, I think about this stuff.'** You know, he didn't have a television, he couldn't watch Foxnews, he didn't have facebook, he didn't know how many likes he had, he wasn't doing Snapchat, he didn't have any of that stuff. He sat

around and thought all day, imagine that, being the wisest guy that ever lived, and you got nothing to distract you, and you sit around all day and you think about these things. He says *'All this have I seen, I've applied it to my heart, every work that is done under the sun,' "there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt."* the guy whose in charge ends up not to be good for him to rule over somebody else. [Now think of a few leaders where that was true, Abraham Lincoln, ended slavery in the United States, but his health was destroyed, grew old before his time, and then was assassinated.] **"And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity." (verse 10)** King James says "from the place of the holy," the Hebrew says *"from the holy place"* which Solomon was well aware of, because he had built the Temple. He says **"And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the holy place, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity." (verse 10)** he says, so the wicked, *'Let me tell you, they go up, they can play the role, in the Holy Place, I've seen them come and go, I watched them get buried, and then they're gone, they're gone, they aggravate people, people watch them come out of church on Sunday, they're waving at everybody with their Bible in their hand, and everybody saying 'ah what a hypocrite, how can he be going out of there, he's in favor of abortion, he's in favor of homosexuality, and what's he doing waving a Bible,' and he says 'Look, understand, this all goes by, this all goes by, what goes on in your life? We can see the wicked, they go up to the Holy Place, that act, they play the role, they do this, and they get buried, they're gone, nobody remembers them.'* And he says, the problem is, in **verse 11**, they talk about how the wicked can get away with that, **"because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."** Remarkable. **"Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." (verse 11)** We see in our culture, you know, somebody is up for rape, the 5<sup>th</sup> time, and everybody sits

around scratching their heads, *'What shall we do with him?'* [during WWII if a US soldier was caught raping a girl, he was tried and hung, or shot instantly], where they have molested children, or somebody's up for murder the third time, *'What should we do?'* And in a culture where the perpetrator becomes the one with more rights than the arresting officer or the person that has to handle them has to be more worried about everybody, you know, all the rights, and reading the Miranda rights, in other parts of the world reading Miranda rights on the battle field, we've kind of lost our minds a little bit. [Comment: applied to our children, this verse spells big trouble, and leads to a criminal mind.] You know, there are countries in the world, I'm not endorsing it, I'm just telling you, there are places where if they catch you stealing, they'll take you to the center of the square, people will come out and watch it, then they cut your hand off, that still goes on. I'm not endorsing it, I'm just saying, when we live in a neighborhood where there's people walking around with one arm missing, you feel a little safer going out at night. There's still places where adultery is a death sentence. There's places in the world where if they catch you with a joint, one joint, you're going to jail. You ain't coming out. There's places where you throw a gum wrapper on the ground, you get caned in front of people, beaten with canes. That place is clean, I guarantee you. I'm not endorsing any of that, I'm just saying there's a principle here that Solomon is taking note of. He says **"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, it doesn't happen, it doesn't get dealt with, it says *"therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."*** You say to your kids *Don't do that!*' Now, here's what you have to learn, parents, don't yell at your kids, walk softly and carry a big stick [chuckles], you don't ever want them to have warning. Look, you never spank your kid for being nuts, because they're all crazy. You spank them for disobedience. They're going to do things, that you're going to think, *'I never thought I had to make a rule for that.'* Who'd have ever thought you have to make a rule for *'Don't do this in the bathroom, to the wall, but the next time you do this you're going get it.'* Because if you become a yeller, what they know is, *'Don't do that!'* it doesn't mean anything to them, because they're watching your meter go up, your

temperature. The next time *'Did I tell you not to do that!! The next time you do that you're going to get it!!!'* now even then, they know you're not at the edge yet, because you've become a screamer, and they learn to read you, and because they realize **'because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore their hearts are set to do all kinds of evil.'** If you love your kid, don't do that screaming, and here's why, let it be discipline, never punishment. Discipline has to be relative to disobedience, not just because they're doing crazy stuff, kids do crazy stuff their whole lives. *'The next time you swing out the back car door into the street while I'm driving'* you'd never think you'd have to make a rule about that [I know kids where you would]. *'Do not throw those sticky things on the ceiling anymore,'* you know how it goes. We see that in our kids, so the same thing plays out in an adult. Now look, God is slow to anger, he's plenteous in mercy. He's not saying you just smoke somebody as soon as they step across the line. In fact, the Bible tells us that people misinterpret God's longsuffering as approval. Because God doesn't deal with them right away, Romans chapter 2 says, the goodness of God, his longsuffering is to lead men to repentance, to make room for that, but men misinterpret that as God's approval in the way they're living. *'Hey, ya, we're sleeping together, but business is doing good, we're taking everything under the table, but ya, we smoke dope every weekend, but we don't smoke during the week, and everything's going fine,'* nothings going fine, you're running out of room, he's slowly tightening your reins, he is slow to anger because he's hoping his goodness and his mercy will make a space to bring you, to lead you to repentance because he loves you. But ultimately because he **does** love you, he can't let you flourish in your sin. He's bringing a picture of civil government here. He says in **verse 12, "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God."** (verses 12-13) *'Hey, I don't have to listen to those Bible-thumpers, look at the way I'm living, I get away with it, there's no problem,'* circle "yet" **"yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that**

**fear God, which fear before him:” (verse 12b)** The truth is, verse 12b, these are going to be the folks that see God’s blessing, not the person who does evil a hundred times. **“but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.” (verse 13)** *‘Which are as a shadow’* here’s the wisest man who ever lived. He’s saying this thing is over so fast, the days of the wicked, they think they’re getting away with something, he says their days are like a shadow, **“because he feareth not before God.”**

*In This World We Live In, The Just Suffer And The Wicked Prosper*

**“There is a vanity which”** he says *‘I’ve seen this, I know what you’re going to say,’* **“There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said this also is vanity.” (verse 14)** You see a just man, you think *‘Well if God is in heaven, and God’s just, how can this happen?’* How can Joseph be sold into slavery, and he was one of the kids that was really upright, how can he do the right thing in Egypt and not sleep with Potiphar’s wife and get thrown in prison for that? How can Job, who was upright above all the men on the face of the earth, be going through all of this suffering, with his “friends” around him, chewing him up alive, and he’s a righteous man? Solomon says, **‘You know, I’ve seen this, I’ve seen, I know there’s a vanity,’** he says **‘there’s a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be just men unto whom it happens according to the work of wicked men,’** you think, *‘Why are bad things happening to these good people?’* Jesus tells us about Lazarus, sitting at the gate of the rich man, in Luke chapter 16, begging for crumbs, and yet, when they entered eternity, it was Lazarus who was in Abraham’s bosom, and the wealthy man was in Hades. He says, I know, these things do happen. **“again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said**

**that this also is vanity.” (verse 14b)** It looks like they’re blessed, all the time. There are Ahab’s, there are Haman’s, they flourish, there are Nebuchadnezzar’s, there are Sennacherib’s, there are these that, they’re wicked, everything goes their way, he says **‘I understand that those observations can be made, the conclusion then becomes ‘life is unfair,’ and then if you believe in God, then it becomes, ‘Well if he’s in charge of everything, he’s unfair, or ‘he doesn’t care,’ or ‘he can’t control these things.’** Solomon says, **‘I’ve worked through all of these things, and there’s wicked men whom it happens according to the righteous, and I said, this also is vanity, this is nonsense,’** and the reason it is, is because he knows God is just. [Jesus in Luke 16 took this question, where we tend to view things in the horizontal, what’s happening to the good and evil on the horizontal, and applies it to the vertical. And when you apply it to the vertical true justice is achieved in these situations, when justice appears to be lacking on the here and now horizontal.]

*Don’t Try To Figure God Out, His Ways Are Above  
Our Ways*

**“Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.” (verse 15)** ‘eat, drink, and be merry,’ if you wonder where that came from, that’s where it came from. He’s wrong, there’s more in life than to eat, drink and be merry. **“for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.” (verse 15b)** again, “under the sun,” earthly existence. And **“When I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:) then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it: yea, farther; though a wise man think to know it, yet**

shall he not be able to find it.” (verses 16-17) He said, **‘When I wanted to understand this, see the business, see the way things operate on this ball of dirt, understand there are those, where they work day and night, never give any sleep to their eyes,’** then he says, **‘Then I beheld all the work of God that a man cannot find out, the work that is done under the sun, because, though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it.’** “yea, farther; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.” he realizes, he searched all this out, sit around with his cogitations, work though all of this, I see those, they don’t even give themselves sleep, working and working and working, and you look at all this, does it work out, you can’t even understand how all of the Providence of God overrules all of this. His ways are above our ways, they’re passed finding out. **Man doesn’t live on understanding God, man lives on the promises of God.** If we could understand everything he does, we wouldn’t need a God, because we’d be as smart as he is. We live on his promises. He says here that he sought to know all of this, but there was more than he could find out. Look, the great thing is, we have a Book. Solomon no doubt had the Torah, probably had the Book of Job, he had some of the historical books, he had his father’s Psalms, we’ve got the whole story, Old Testament, New Testament, we got the whole thing. So we can look at Solomon’s frustration and realize that we do know the end of certain things, we do know the final analysis of certain things that he says he didn’t know. And as I look at all of this, and I’m sure it’s the same for you, I’m more troubled by what I do know than by what I don’t know. He’s all frustrated because of the things he can’t figure out. I’m a little more frustrated by the things I have figured out. I mean, **‘husbands love your wives the way Christ loves the Church,’** that’ll keep you busy for awhile. Any husband here doing that, please raise your hand so I can see the problem you have with lying. [loud laughter] **‘Wives, submit to your husbands as the Church submits to Christ,’** Charles Swindoll says *“We don’t lack for knowing, we lack for doing.”* Yet wonderfully, we know the grace of Christ, wonderfully we know he’s raising us as his children, wonderfully we know him, we’re going from glory to glory, as we behold him, we’re being changed, and the Father’s

committed to the good work he's begun in each of us. Solomon doesn't have any of that chemistry in his equations. [i.e. the entire plan of salvation, in it's entirety, was not revealed to Solomon at this point in time in Biblical history.]

## *Ecclesiastes 9:1-18*

**“For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred *by all that is* before them. 2 *All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.* 3 *This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.* 4 *For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.* 5 *For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.* 6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun. 7 *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.* 8 *Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.* 9 *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.* 10 Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, wither thou goest. 11 *I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle***

to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to the men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. 12 For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so *are* the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them. 13 This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto me: 14 *There is* a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: 15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. 16 Then said I, *Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.* 17 *The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.* 18 *Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good."*

### *Everything's In God's Hands*

Chapter 9, he says this, you know, here's a guy who was never held back from anything, as far as finance or pleasure, he's a guy whose done everything, he says "**For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.**" (verse 1) he can't escape that, he can't get away from that, that everything's in God's hands. He says '*I gave myself to know this, even in wisdom and the righteous in their works, all of that's really in the hands of God,*' and he says '*and no man can really look at the circumstances of life and measure love or hatred there.*' '*Well God must hate me, look what's going on in my life,*' and you let that go and in another month or two, and all of sudden you find yourself in the situation you had never been in if you hadn't gone through this storm that he let you go through. Or sometimes you think, the fat city, the most wonderful things happening, '*and I'm at leisure,*' and a

terrible thing happens because you let down your guard. He says ***'who can know that?'*** What he's saying is, we need more than the natural revelation, we need more than observation, we need more than what we can take in, we need something apart from human observation. And that's the beauty of the Book that we hold in our hands, as we study through. Solomon is saying that. Look, he says in **verse 2, "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth on oath."** There's wicked men that prosper, we looked at that. There's righteous men that suffer, there are ungodly men like Ahab that get killed in battle, there's godly men like Josiah that get killed in a battle. All people sweat, all people work, all people get headaches, Christians and non-Christians, get sickness, get cancer, I don't know anybody that died of good health [except Moses and Aaron, God took them while they were in good health]. All things come to all, in one sense, he's making an observation. In the other sense, the eternal sense, that's not true at all, because there are two destinations, there is separation from God, and there's eternity in the presence of God. So there is a measure of truth in what he says, all things come to all alike, there's truth in that, there's also error in that. Look what he says here, ***"there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as his that feareth an oath."*** they both experience things with life and family and illness and weather, as is the good, so is the sinner, he's on thin ice there, a measure of truth in that, but he's also told us before that the man who is righteous and fears God, God will protect him and God will keep him, so there is a difference. ***"and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath."*** the same thing happens, ***"This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead."*** (verse 3) well, ya,

everybody dies. So Solomon is saying things, you have to understand, there's things in the Book of Ecclesiastes that were recorded inerrantly, it doesn't mean that Solomon, everything he's saying in his frustration is true. But the Bible has accurately recorded his errors in his thinking for us. He says all end up in one place, all go to the dead, that's not true, because there are those, Jesus, the rich man and Lazarus, one of them is in Abraham's bosom, the other one is in Hades. One man experiences physical death and spiritual death, but all experience physical death, but the sinner, the lost person experiences physical death, then spiritual death, spiritual death is eternal separation from God. So there is a great divergence in the final analysis, of course he does not have some of the light that we believe in. [There are differing views about heaven, hell and eternal rewards within the Body of Christ, and about the interpretation about Lazarus and the rich man. To read about some of those, see <https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm>]

### *About The Dead And Death*

He says in **verse 4**, **“For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.”** Now this is funny for him, because he had said before **‘better is the day of death than the day of birth,’** that was kind of wrangling his way of saying **‘ya, well you know, it's better to be a living dog than a dead lion, because as long as you're alive there's hope.’** As long as you're still breathing, there can still be repentance, there can be turning to God. Once you're gone you're gone. Born once, die twice, born twice, die once, you know that whole thing, it's a great sweat shirt. Plenty to think about, should be a bumper sticker that everybody has, born once, die twice, born twice, die once. He's basically saying, as long as there's still life, there's still hope, a live dog is better than a dead lion, **“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing,** [Comment: that statement right there tends to prove soul-sleep, that the spirit in man, as shown elsewhere in Ecclesiastes, goes to God, all the

spirit's in man, upon death, go to God. But upon death, that "spirit in man" is unconscious until the person is actually resurrected back to either physical or spirit existence, in one of the two major resurrections prophecied in the Bible. That is what Ecclesiastes apparently doctrinally teaches on the subject. Now Calvary Chapels don't use Ecclesiastes for doctrinal teaching and interpretation. Again, see <https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm>]

**neither have they any more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.” (verse 5)** the dead don't know that, he's going to say. The person that's still alive, they know they're gonna die. **“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.”**

**(verse 5)** most do, some of them think they're going to be frozen in liquid nitrogen and reawakened when technology advances to the point you can wake them up. [haha, they'll wake up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection, back to physical life, and their first thought will be *“it worked!”* before the resurrected, immortal, shining as the sun Jesus tells them it was he who resurrected them, joke's on them.] Don't know what's going to happen if there's a power outage in the mean time, some of them are going to wake up with frostbite and freezer burn. **“the living know that they shall die”** you want to think about that when you're in sin, think about that when you're alive. Before I was a believer, I didn't want to think about that, I was aware of it, but I didn't want to think about it. Then one of your friends O.D.'s or commits suicide, and all of a sudden you're standing near a casket, and there's no way to escape it, you have to think about it. It's something God's given to us, God has placed eternity in our hearts. And that's the equalizer, it doesn't matter what's happening with the Sixers or the Eagles or the weather or the Democrats or the Republicans, when you stand at that box, it preaches a sermon. And it says something *‘If you're not saved, there's something you really don't like to hear.’* The living, at least they know that they're going to die, that's why a living dog is better than a dead lion. **“but the dead know not any thing,”** and again he's wrong there, because we see those, again, in Abraham's bosom, we see those, Revelation chapter 6, under the altar saying ***‘how long O Lord before you avenge us, those that are slaughtering your saints***

*on the earth,' we see 'Revelation chapter 5, a multitude of nations, kindred and tongues gathered around the throne of God and the Lamb, thou who wast slain and hast redeemed us, with thy blood, those of every nation, kindred and tongue, made us kings and priests,' so he's wrong, there is knowledge after death. [Comment: different parts of the body of Christ have differing takes on this. Those that believe and take this verse literally believe, as Solomon says in these chapters, that the spirit in man that goes to God at death is unconscious, until they are resurrected, in either one or the other of the two major resurrections prophesied in the Bible. If that is the case, then the dead, until they are resurrected, do know nothing. Either way, it makes no difference in the final outcome. For more on these variety of beliefs about the dead and resurrections,*

see <https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm>.]

**“neither have they any more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.”** Well Peter says he wants to see us have an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God, we stand at the Bema Throne of Christ, our rewards. So he's wrong in these things, great frustration as he's putting these things out in front of us. **“Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”** [this is true if soul-sleep is true, all emotions and knowledge of those who die perishes with them, their spirit in man goes dormant, according to Solomon, which the Calvary Chapels do not use for doctrine, but other parts of the Body of Christ do.] It's not true, isn't it amazing, we're going rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years [yes, after our resurrection to immortality. But that's after we've waited, unconscious, in the grave up until our resurrection to immortality. Again, it doesn't matter which interpretation you believe, we all end up experiencing the same outcome, alive, resurrected back to life, but this time as immortal sons and daughters of God.] The nation of Israel is going to serve them for a thousand years. We have a remarkable portion in things that are to be done under the sun, after our physical frame dies, in the resurrection [just as I've been saying]. Again, Solomon doesn't have that. So he didn't understand, somebody as brilliant as him, working through the

frustrations that he has here, as he looked at things. [But for some strange reason king David understood he was going to be resurrected into God's immortal Kingdom, Psalm 16:10-11.]

### *So While You're Alive, Enjoy It*

So he says **“Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.” (verse 7)** I don't know if this is morose, he's just saying, we do have this, again, Thanksgiving, Christmas, all the kids and the grandkids with all their spouses, the house, it's a circus. Now I just love to sit there and watch everybody screaming, fighting, yelling, crying, laughing, it doesn't get any better than that, on earth. I'm the richest man in the world. A couple years ago Cathy in surgery, it was an oncologist down in Hopkins, we thought she had ovarian cancer, ended up not to be that, though the surgeon thought it was, and you're sitting there a number of weeks later, sitting in the living room there watching like a chick flick, Hallmark or something, I'd rather watch Rocky beating somebody up. She says *'You've watched this 100 times,'* I said *'I've watched it 200 times, and I'll watch it 200 more times, I can watch this Rocky movie forever, what's wrong with you?'* But, I just remember sitting there with her, thinking, *'I don't envy any man on the planet.'* I don't need to be George Soros or any millionaires, I don't envy anybody. I'm sitting here on a cold night, watching the Hallmark channel, next to my wife who doesn't have cancer, junk food in the refrigerator if a commercial comes on, this is as good as it gets. I think Solomon, in the middle of all of this, I think he's affirming this, ***'go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works.'*** **“Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.” (verse 8)** you know, smell good while you can, anointing the head was a sign of joy. And I think his heart twinges when he says this, **“Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy**

**portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.” (verse 9) ‘*thy wife whom thou lovest,*’ it’s singular, he said he couldn’t find one in a thousand, and he had a thousand. He knew frustration. He looks at a man who walks by, he sees a guy sitting in his living room watching the Hallmark channel with his wife, he says ‘*that’s good.*’ A guy loves her, she loves him, they have peace, that’s good. Do that, that’s a good thing. We throw so much of it away, “**live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity,**” I think he feels certainly his failures as he says these things, “**all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.**” (verse 9)**

*While You’re Alive Whatever You’re Doing, Do It With All Your Might*

**“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for *there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*” (verse 10)** we have that in the New Testament, that’s a good ideal, whatever you have found to do, do it with all your might. Paul will say it this way, “**What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?**” Solomon has none of this, “**which is in you, you have of God, and you are not your own, for you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.**” just whatever you do, do it with all of your might to the Lord, you’re a purchased possession, you have a destiny ahead of you, do whatever you do with all of your heart to the Lord, you only get to do this one time. You look around this room, you have friends here. Let me tell you something, time goes by like that, **snap!** Don’t ever miss a chance to tell them you love them, that you care about them, ask them what you can pray about, what’s going on in their life, because we only get to do this once, we only get to do it one time. Whatever you find to do with your hand, do it with all of your might, “**for *there is no work, nor device, nor***

**knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” (verse 10b)** and that’s where you’re going, he says. **‘There’s no finishing the undone duties when you’re there, all of the duties that can be finished can only be finished now, there is no finishing of undone duties when you’re there.’** And only what’s done for Christ will last.

*God’s Providence Overrides All These Things, Our Lives Are Not Happenstance*

He says, **“I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.” (verse 11)** Now, here he is again, in error here, but he’s making an observation [depending on your doctrinal stance, he is making far fewer errors than some think. If you include Ecclesiastes as inerrant Word of God, you have to use what Solomon says as an additive modifier for your doctrinal interpretations, which modifies what the Bible has to say about soul-sleep, or unconscious spirit in man upon death until a resurrection has occurred. If you don’t allow God’s Word through Solomon to be that additive modifier, you end up with a different interpretation in that area of Scripture. This is why so many different parts of the Body of Christ differ in the secondary interpretations of Scripture, whereas they all agree on what the simple Gospel of Christ is, so they’re all genuine parts of the Body of Christ]. He’s saying **‘I’ve seen the best athletes, through one thing or another, lose the race, I’ve seen the strongest not succeed, I’ve seen the wisest not get riches, I’ve seen men with the greatest understanding and the greatest skill not succeed.’** But what he does here, is he assigns it then to fate, everything in life is chance. Is it all chance? Charles Spurgeon said *“Were you saved by fate, or were you saved by faith?”* You’re walking down the street one day and God decided he was going to save somebody, so he dropped salvation down, and you walked faster than the guy behind you, so it hit you on

the head instead of hitting him on the head, and you got saved and he didn't, so you're saved by fate? Solomon's saying here, this is fate. The ancient rabbis said that coincidence is not a kosher word. In all of these things there's God's providence. It doesn't say don't be skilled. We should be skilled in the things that we do, we should do things to the best of our ability. Chuck Smith, my pastor, used to say "*Do your best, commit the rest.*" We should use wisdom, we should use understanding. If you're in the race, if you're in the NFL, I'd want to be the best receiver, so that when they put the mic in my face I'm going to talk about my Saviour. You want to be a quarterback, be the best quarterback so you can talk about Jesus, you want to be a heavyweight boxer, be the heavyweight champ of the whole world, so when they put the mic in your face you can talk about Jesus. You succeed do it with all your might, because you have a purpose. You've sworn allegiance to a King, that's what we talked about in the beginning of this study. And there's a reason to succeed. But he says here, but there are, in life, when the swiftest one doesn't win the race, the strongest one doesn't win the battle, the wisest one doesn't accumulate riches, and the one with the greatest understanding and greatest skill doesn't succeed. The truth is, in some of those circumstances, there is the providence of God, holding us back, when he might steer us in another direction. And that is true. [I hate being guided that way, there are less painful ways to be guided by God.] Those things do happen. I don't feel like my life is a happenstance, like I just got here coincidentally, I don't ever live thinking that. [I know my dad was protected from ever seeing battle by being assigned to degauss ships at Pearl **after** the threat of invasion from the Japanese was over with in Hawaii. I look at circumstances that guaranteed my line leading up to me, and the protection I received in my early years through my 20s. Look up on this site Psalm 139 and read it, that God designed us before we were ever conceived, and wove us in the womb, yes, at the molecular level, protein level, DNA level, gene level, right up through birth, that's in the Hebrew of what David was inspired to write in Psalm 139. We are not happenstance, God knows the beginning from the end, in my opinion, having studied the Bible for over 40+ years, for all of mankind. We'll learn more about that at the

Wedding Feast of the Lamb.]...I remember we started this study in 1981 in November, Cathy and I looked for a church to go to, we couldn't find one, we were used to going and listening to Pastor Chuck, underlining our Bibles, going to church in our genes, we just couldn't find that flavour, we were spoiled. [I think he was attending Calvary Chapel out in Costa Mesa, before he moved back to Philly with Cathy, and there were no Calvary Chapels around.] A lot of great Christian people, with a lot of churches in the area. So we said *'Let's start a pilot study,'* so we started a Bible study, 20 people. A few of the people here were there. And then it started to grow, it was November '81, June '82 we were saying *'Let's have Sunday morning,'* there were about 100 people coming, so June '82 our first Sunday morning service, about 80 adults, and then it just kind of grew from there [up to where it was 30,000, and then he trained other pastors, so it divided up into a number of congregations throughout Philly, making it more manageable for Pastor Joe, I'm sure.] People started saying *'Hey Pastor Joe, hey Pastor Joe,'* so I'm kind of riding home after church saying *'OK Lord, what's the deal? they're calling me Pastor Joe. If I was you, I wouldn't pick me, this could turn out bad. I wouldn't do this.'* And then finally, you kind of say *'Alright, ah, if you're willing I'm game, I wouldn't do this if I was you, but you don't make mistakes, so if you're willing I'm game.'* And you go through this, you kind of look at things, this is not happenstance, this is not coincidence, you finally say *'Alright Lord, something's happening here, you've led me, you put my feet in a certain place, you've given me children, you've given me, like in Exodus 21, put the ring in my ear, take me to your door, I'd rather be a servant in your house, I've gotten me a wife, I've gotten me children, finding you as Master and slaving for you is kinder than any freedom I've ever known.'* Solomon says, **'God's providence overrides these things.'**

### *Two Final Lessons*

**"For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil**

**time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.” (verse 12)** now of course he’s thinking, he’s looking at the unjust, he comes to this last lesson about wisdom, this last thing that he says here. He says **“This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me:” (verse 13)** he says *‘it really made an impression on me,’* **“There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.” (verses 14-15)** Now Solomon thinks about those things, because he is a great king. And he understood in his day, you would lay siege to a city, and if you laid siege to it long enough, normally the people inside would begin to starve or die because they didn’t have a water source. He understands the process of laying siege to a city. So he said, little city, few men, great king comes against it, besieges it, and built great bulwarks against it. Now, there was a man that was found in it, a poor but wise man. And he, by his wisdom, delivered the city. So this poor person inside, extremely wise, contrives something to deal with the forces that are outside, Solomon says *‘I’ve seen this,’* and he delivers the city, then he says *‘yet, no man remembers that same poor man.’* Nobody remembered him. [Henry A. Wallace was FDR’s VP from the great depression through most of WWII, many of his policies and great skill helped deliver the US out of financial and farm depression, and helped us win WWII, but he was unceremoniously replaced by Truman in FDR’s 4<sup>th</sup> term, where he became, in spite of all he had done and his great social, economic and farming wisdom, a forgotten man in our nation’s history.] He said **“Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.” (verse 16)** [that’s just exactly what happened to the wisdom of Henry A. Wallace, it became politically despised after all the power-brokers, the elite in Washington and Wall Street took him down in the smoky back-room politics during the Democratic National Convention in 1944. Thereafter his wisdom became despised by the American people, who quickly forgot Henry A. Wallace, as Truman quietly shoved him aside. This is real, it happens folks. By the way,

Wallace was not a politician.] Everybody's forgotten about what he said. **"The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good."** (verses 17-18) he will go on in chapter 10 to say that dead flies will cause the ointment to stink, you get a couple dead flies in your perfume, it gives it that old dead fly smell. He says this, ***'I've seen this, I've seen a great army, a great king come, he's got in the natural all of the advantages, and yet in this small city, the siege has been laid against it, there's a poor man, nobody really knows much about him, and yet he has great wisdom, he comes up with a plan that they yield to, and through that, they vanquish the enemy, they have victory by one means or another. And when that's all over, nobody remembers the poor guy, he's gone. And then I said,'*** now look, he has two practical lessons here, alright, verses 16 and 17. So let me ask you something, just remember this if you've done something for somebody, and you've bailed them out of a jam, you've helped them, and you think *'That's Stanley, I've shoveled their snow, they were going down the street, they had a flat tire, I stopped, I worked on it, I took the tire to the gas station, got it fixed, blown back up, and then they have a barbeque and they invite that jerk and they don't invite me,'* look, there's a lesson here, he said. Two things, he said. ***First*** in verse 16, he says this, he says **'Learn to estimate men [and woman too, by the way] by their wisdom and their godliness, and not their outward appearance.'** City, besieged, ready to be destroyed, great king, great army, an individual that nobody ever thought had much potential and much to contribute, a poor wise man delivers the city. So first he says to those that are the beneficiaries, ***learn to judge men and women by their wisdom and their godliness, not by whether they're on a billboard or television show. Secondly,*** he says to the one whose exercising wisdom, he says, **'we should spend ourselves, we should work in the best interests of others, but not for their approval.'** He says, ***'Understand this, in this earthly journey, give yourself, that's what our Saviour did, he left his place in glory, and he came, was made in the likeness of man, not just like a man, but like a***

***servant, gave himself unto death, not in a hospice, not in a hospital, but the death of the cross.*** Each realization about it as he steps further and further and further down. So we finish to the beneficiaries, look around, there will be people around you, you need to understand...[tape ends]...[transcript of an expository sermon on Ecclesiastes 8:1-17 and Ecclesiastes 9:1-18, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related link:

For the differing interpretations about soul-sleep within the greater Body of Christ, see <https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm>