

Ecclesiastes 7:10-16

What a privilege it is to be able to study God's Word. Today, we want to continue our study in the book of Ecclesiastes on It's a Good Life, and if at all possible, I would ask you to have your Bible open to chapter 7 as we look at these verses together.

Last time, we looked at verses 8-9, and I want to go back just a little bit on verse 8 and 9 there. And it says there in the last part of verse 8 and verse 9, *^{8b}and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. ⁹Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

We saw there that patience is better than pride, and as we look at these verses, we need to also go to Proverbs 13:10. It says, *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.* The person who does not allow himself to get overly anxious is better off than a person who actually lets himself be controlled by his pride.

That's where anger comes from a lot of times. Maybe we get our feelings hurt or somebody does something that we think is going to, more or less, put us down. In other words, make us look bad. And we certainly... at those times we need to be praying and asking God to take care of this in our lives, and we're not to be in a hurry to be angry. Don't look for things as an excuse to be angry. Don't lose control. The Bible teaches us here in verse 9 don't lose control, because fools let their deep-felt emotions control them. We shouldn't let that happen.

In Proverbs 14:29, it says: *He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.*

And Proverbs 16:32 goes on to say: *He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.* In other words, it's better to control yourself. It's more profitable to be in charge of a mighty city or something that you want to be in control of. It's better to control your own spirit. It's better to control yourself and not fly off the handle.

Now we look in Ecclesiastes 7:10. It says there: *Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.* I believe what it's saying here is the present is better than the past, and we should not question and say why were the former days better, because it is not a sensible, wise inquiry, according to verse 10.

And we often quote it or we often say or we hear someone say "the good ol' days." This is what we're living right now; it's the good ol' days of tomorrow. But I got news for you. Right now's the best time of our lives that we live in. Right now is the days that we can do things, and not only do things in this world, but we can do things for the Lord that's going to be something that we can look forward to in our lives to come with Jesus Christ.

We need to be winning souls as Christians and winning souls means this... presenting Jesus Christ as Savior to those people who do not know Him. These days that we live in right now are the best days, because now we can do something. We're here now. Yesterday's gone, and we need to be doing something now that is worthwhile, and the best thing we can be doing as Christians is telling other people about Jesus.

Now in verses 11-12 of Ecclesiastes 7, it says, *11Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. 12For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.*

It's good to use wisdom with an inheritance. In other words, we need to be wise. We need to know how to take care of the inheritance, and wisdom is a good inheritance. We also want to look at the fact that wisdom along with an inheritance is good and is profitable for the living. In other words, once again, we're living right now, and it's good because wisdom is protection, and so is money, but knowledge is better because it lets us know that wisdom gives life, according to verse 12. Knowledge produces understanding and lets us know wisdom gives life to those who have it. I want to read several verses in connection with this in the book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 1:2 says, *To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding.*

Proverbs 2:6: *for the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

You know, we can gain the wisdom of this world, but the wisdom of this world may place us in a position whereby we can make money and we can gain wisdom as to how to invest that money to make more money, but what God gives us is much better than that. Some people look at success as what they have, the material things in this life, but it's not what we have now that is really a success. It's how we're living and what we're living for in the future, and what we should be living for in the future is to see our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And the only way you can do that is to receive Him

right now. That's success in this life, is to know Christ as your Savior and to be living for Him.

Proverbs 4:5 says: *Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.*

Proverbs 5:1: *My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding.* With the wisdom of God comes understanding.

Proverbs 14:6: *A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.*

Proverbs 19:8: *He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good.*

Proverbs 23:4: *Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.*

It's God who will give the increase. We don't have to sit around and worry, and this goes back to verses 8-9. We don't have to sit around and worry and fret over things that we don't have. We don't have to worry about the things of this world once we turn everything over to the Lord. God gives us the wisdom and understanding to really understand those things once we get into His Word and we let Him lead and guide us through this life.

Now, as we go into the second part of Chapter 7, I see here once again counsel and that counsel is this: Resignation is better than indignation. And you'll see what I'm speaking of here in just a moment.

In verse 13 of chapter 7, it says, *Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?* In other words, a man cannot undo what God has done, whether His work is right or wrong in our

sight. In other words, we can't improve upon what God has done. We can't change it, and what God does is always right.

Job 8:3: Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

In Job 34:12, it says this: *Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.* He answers that question that's presented there in Job 8:3. He answers that in Job 34:12. It says God does not do wickedly; neither does He pervert judgment. In other words, He's always right.

And I find that, when I think I'm right about a lot of things, I realize that after a while in looking into God's Word and trusting Him, I realize that some of the things I've done have been wrong. And I believe you would do the same thing once you've stopped to think about it. We can't change what God has done. We can't change what God is going to do, but we can certainly listen to Him, and we can do what He wants us to do.

Verse 14 of Ecclesiastes 7 says this: *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.* What's this speaking about? I believe what it's saying is be happy when everything is going good, when you are prospering, and in the day of adversity when things are going bad, consider what lessons you might learn. Learn even from the bad things that happen in your life. And then the future cannot be known by contrasting prosperity and adversity in a man's life, according to verse 14 there, the last part of that. Let me say that again. The future cannot be known by contrasting prosperity and adversity in a man's life.

God knows best, and we need to learn not only from the prosperity that we have but we need to learn from the adversity that comes along. So many times we get irritated and upset because something bad happens to us, but we need to learn from that just as we learn from what good comes into our lives.

Now as we move into the third section of Ecclesiastes chapter 7, verses 15-22, we see once again the word "counsel," and I'm speaking of counsel in this chapter of Ecclesiastes. Counsel, this is balanced living.

In verses 15-22, we also see do things in moderation. In verse 15, it says, *All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth his life in his wickedness.* Well, the righteous don't always prosper, nor do the wicked always suffer. You've probably thought this, or you've heard somebody say this: "I wonder why that happened to that person. That person was such a good person. Why did that have to happen?" Maybe they lost a loved one, or maybe they got hurt, or maybe they got killed.

Or maybe this has happened in your life. Maybe you've gotten hurt or maybe you need something in your life and you just don't understand why that happened. Maybe you're living the best you can, you've been saved, but that verse teaches that bad things happen to good people, and things that are good happen to bad people. And we don't understand that a lot of times, but God has a reason for that.

It's not wrong for us to wonder about that, but we shouldn't, once again, get angry when something bad happens to us. We need to learn from that and we shouldn't be angry when something good happens to a person who we perceive as being evil or bad.

In verse 16 of Ecclesiastes 7, it says: *Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?* Well, don't go to extremes or go too far in trying to be righteous or wise, lest you defeat yourself. Once again, a person is saved by trusting Jesus Christ as Savior.

Let's pray.

Father, thank You today for the privilege of presenting Your Word. I pray if there's one listening today, Lord, and I pray for that one who's listening who does not know you. May that person receive Christ as Savior even this day. Help each of us who are saved to live for You and to exalt you always. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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