

Can A Believer Enjoy Life?

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26

June 23, 2019 – Pastor Nick Neves

Through the first two chapters of Ecclesiastes, God is only explicitly mentioned once, in 1:13. But verse 24 marks a change of _____. From 2:24 through chapter 3, the Preacher will focus on how God's involvement changes the whole complexion of man's life.

You have likely heard the principle declared in verse 24 before: **'Eat, drink, and be merry! For tomorrow we die.'** How does that philosophy seem to conflict with the way God calls believers to live?

Verse 26 provides the key to understanding this passage. It describes to us two different categories of people:

1. Those who _____ God
2. _____

To the first of these two groups, God has given _____

To the second of these two groups, God has given a _____

In order to properly enjoy life, we must learn to put the pleasures of life in their proper place: The passing things of this life are not what we should live for. They are not the answer; meaning is not found in them. When we see that, we can enjoy them for what they are, rather than lamenting over what they are not.

Two common threads that run through these passages in Ecclesiastes will help us to enjoy life the right way:

1. The believer will enjoy the world, not blindly, but _____.

Whatever you would enjoy in this life, get in the habit of asking yourself **'What does this (possession/achievement/dream/relationship/habit) truly mean to me?'**

2. The things that we might enjoy are to be understood as gifts _____

*Put the pleasures of life in their proper place – enjoy them, but not as the answer to life, rather as blessings from the God who is HIMSELF the answer to life's great questions.

Ecclesiastes 3:12-13 – *I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live;¹³ also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.*

Ecclesiastes 3:22 – *So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?*

Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 – ¹⁸ *Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. ¹⁹ Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God.*

Ecclesiastes 8:15 – ¹⁵ *And I commend joy, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun.*

Ecclesiastes 9:7-10 – ⁷ *Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do. ⁸ Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head. ⁹ Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. ¹⁰ Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.*

Ecclesiastes 11:8-9 – ⁸ *So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity. ⁹ Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.*