

Ecclesiastes– Shadows of Wealth

Ecclesiastes 5:8-6:9

“We pursue being a disciple making family: surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and saturated in His word.”

This passage of Scripture shows us that our life is really just a shadow. All the hard work and toil and search for wealth and income is meaningless if we see that as the key to life. The real meaning to life comes through fearing God and enjoying Him. Ultimately, to surrender our life to the rescue of Jesus. When work and wealth and wisdom are filtered through this view we can experience a meaningful and joyful life regardless of our finances or lot in life. It may seem that the teacher is repetitive on things as he has already mentioned money in Chapter 2:1-11. It is really just a reminder to us how important a correct view of money and wealth really is to a meaningful life.

1. We are told not to be amazed or surprised at oppression or injustice specifically to the poor. This has proven to be a reality of government or politics throughout history. We see this often in our world today whether it's a third world dictatorial regime oppressing a people, the injustice of human trafficking, or corruption among political leaders. The teacher points out that an official is watched by a higher one and there are yet higher ones over him. Ultimately those leaders are accountable to God. Government is better than anarchy because it can provide structure and resist evil, even if there is possibility for oppression. What can we take away from the command not to be amazed if we see oppression of the poor? How does the pursuit of wealth factor into this scenario? For the oppressed and the oppressor? What should be our response?
2. The bulk of this passage deals with the reality of wealth and money. We tend to always apply passages of wealth and income to someone in a higher tax bracket than us. Therefore, we neglect to apply it to our own lives. Why do you think that is? We oftentimes see people who don't have a lot, but they seem very happy. What is your response to that? How does it make you feel and why? In what ways do meaningful relationships bring more satisfaction than money, income, and things?
3. There are clearly some evils to pursuing wealth and income. We tend to have a sense of security in money. To chase wealth and income as the key to life will always leave us lacking and anxious. How can you battle against anxiety in the area of money, wealth, and income? How has this battle played out for you in the different stages of life?
4. Money and wealth are meaningless if we are not able to enjoy them for the glory of God. Money can be a very positive thing. It can be enjoyed and used for the glory of God and the gospel. How can we find motivation in the gospel to be generous people? How do we stop putting off generosity for the kingdom of God? What holds us back from enjoying the “lot” that God has given us?

5. The teacher points out that if you had 100 children and lived 2,000 years you would still not be happy because you are chasing the wrong thing with wealth. What are some things you thought would give you happiness if you received them? How long did that happiness last? Ultimately, only a life lived in Christ will bring that contentment and joy. It's typically not a matter of knowledge but a matter of obedience. Be honest, what is something you are chasing now for fulfillment? What about your money and wealth, do you see that as a gift from God or something you earned? Do you give God full rights to use your money how he wants to?