

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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Meaning(Less)

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6

TITLE

Dissatisfying Dollars

SCRIPTURE

Ecclesiastes 5:8-20



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Can I get a tow?

Sure. What's your location?

Where did my money go? Nevermind.

So you don't need?

Well, it is great to see you once again Providence family, sadly through screen but I hope that you were doing well. I hope you've had a great week. I hope your families are well, that they're healthy, that you're feeling hopeful these days. If you have with your Bible, I would love for you to look with me to Ecclesiastes chapter five. In a moment, we'll start in verse eight.

So as well, those of you who are guests, we're thrilled that you have joined us. I pray this time will be encouraging to you and if you are here and at this point in life and you're simply curious about who Jesus is, you are on a search for life and for meaning and for life purpose. I pray that God's word here, even this morning will give you clarity and understanding that you would be able to see that the greatest thing that you need, in fact, the only thing that is an absolute essential in your life, is that you would treat Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord.

He is who makes life worth living. So I pray that as we look through a book that is, in many ways, very perplexing. There's a lot of things in this book that are strange to our ears. It's been called the most honest book in the history of the world. Because what the man is doing, his name is Solomon, he's writing, he's seeing all the brokenness, in his own life, in his family, in his home, in his nation and around the world. He's saying there is only one hope for the world and that is, that there must come a rescuer from beyond the sun to come under the sun where we live, and redeem us and rescue us and to be with us.

I want you to know that that relationship with your Creator is available through Jesus Christ. Every single one of us, we have a vision for our life and a vision to make us happy. Whether it's something that we look out and we say, you know what, if I can simply purchase that or if I could experience that, or if I could go to that place, and yet what we know is this, is that every vision for happiness requires something, and that is money.

It requires money, and when people, when two or more people have competing visions of what will make them happy, and there's a limited supply of money, then what happens is the world and in those relationships, we experience tremendous tension and conflict. So you think about it in the home, let's just say it's a marriage, you have a man, you have a woman, husband and wife. If at any point in time they begin to develop a vision for happiness that is different from the other, and yet there's a limited commodity of money in order to resource that vision, well, what's going to happen? What's going to happen is there's going to be conflict.

That if we ingrained within our heart this vision that's out there that we're going to pursue, and it's going to make us happy and yet, there's only so much money than we are willing, quite willing at times, to fight with somebody that we even love. Sometimes we even part with, in order to pursue the vision of happiness that we think is really going to make things work. The same things happen in the marketplace. You have friends, and they come together and they say, let's start a business.

Then suddenly, over a period of time, there's a vision for happiness that sometimes it begins to diverged from one another. One partner in the business has this idea of how we're going to be making money that's going to make us happy and someone else has a different vision, and yet, there's only so much resource to carry out one of those two visions. What happens is conflict.

The same thing happens in politics, really in everything, but in four months, we get to have an election. I say get to because there's a lot of places in the world, that even though this is something that I don't necessarily look forward to simply because of the tension within our own culture right now. There's a lot of places in the world and they have absolutely no possibility to engage in the process of electing leaders. In four months, we are going to have an election. What we're going to find is that each side is going to vilify the other without being terribly proud of their own candidate, and billions of dollars will be spent, billions of dollars will be spent, because a limited supply of money and a vision for happiness is at stake.

This is where we come back to Ecclesiastes five. Solomon who has written this, he's learned some things throughout the course of his life. You see, Solomon was the king and God came to him and bless him in such an unusual way. Said you can ask Me anything you want. Solomon said, what I really need more than anything else is wisdom. Because You are holy, and this is Your people, and I need to understand what is right and what is wrong in order to lead well.

The Bible says that God was so pleased with Solomon that he not only gave him wisdom, but he gave him everything that he didn't ask for, in terms of money and in terms of power, in terms of peace within his reign, and even a long life. In spite of all the blessing, the Bible tells us this Solomon turned his back on God who blessed him so much, and he went in search of meaning in this broken and fallen world and what he found was brokenness and pain.

One of the paths that he pursued as the path of a vision for happiness to find meaning and joy and purpose in life was the greedy accumulation of money. The Bible tells us in first Kings chapter 10, that he was quite skilled at it. So skilled that he was the wealthiest person in the history of the world. In fact, comparatively, even the wealthy people who live today simply wouldn't compare with Solomon's wealth.

What we find is that this greedy accumulation of money where he said, if I could just have this much, I would be happy and then he had that much and it wasn't enough. So he changed the destination. He says, I don't need this much gold, I need this much gold. Then he received this much gold and that wasn't enough.

This continued to escalate throughout his entire life until he finally concluded this is a dead end. This is not where meaning and purpose and joy will actually be found here under the sun. You see, one of the great concerns that I have for us as a church family is that I know that we live in a culture, and we live in a city, and indeed even many who call Providence their home, they live lives of comfort. We live lives of comfort.

Many in our church family are wealthy and yet they do not know it. They have tremendous riches in comparative to the world and yet they still feel poor. Many of us still have some, some of money on the horizon that we think if we can simply arrive at that destination, then finally we will be happy, that life will make sense, that stress will go away, that anxiety will also go away and Solomon you see what he's doing is this, is that God has actually blessed a particular person on the earth in such a way, and then he had him run down because he was so empty because he left the Lord.

All the paths that you and I attempt and yet he was able to do it with unparalleled wealth and resource and power and privilege in order to prove to you and to me that it's a dead end. You see God, by His grace and His love, I hope you know this. He loves you so much. Is that He found it necessary to place this strange, perplexing and sometimes depressing book within the Bible in order to show us Solomon's futility, so that we would not imitate his life, but instead we would learn his lesson.

The lesson that we learned in chapter five, verse eight, through the end of this chapter is simply this, is that godliness with contentment is great gain. Throughout Ecclesiastes, you read this word game where Solomon is saying, I'm going to pursue this and he says, but what is the gain in the end. The same way is it means profit. Meaning, I'm going to invest myself in this way and when I'm finished investing, and I finally have this and I've lived this kind of life and I look back, am I going to conclude that this was profitable to live this way?

What the Bible teaches not only in the New Testament, but right here in chapter five is this is that if you desire great gain on the earth, then it comes with godliness and contentment, literally being so full, your heart so full with the presence of God, that it leaves so little room for the presence of greed.

It's a very wealthy person that enjoys that level of contentment. So I want to pray for us and then we're going to jump in. Father in heaven, I pray that as we read these verses that You would give us understanding and that You would help us to believe I pray Father for faith that would lead to repentance, for faith that would lead to obedience. I pray for faith that would lead to salvation for some who are listening. I pray Father that You would help us to see and to recognize and to believe what You say and when Your Word tells us that we are at risk, would You help us to believe that we are at risk?

So I ask that You would speak through weakness and through all of the distractions that are taking place right now in living rooms around Raleigh and beyond, God that You would help us to find Your word, not only incredibly curious and interesting, but also truthful and trustworthy, and that You would place within our heart a compulsion to believe it, and then to put it into practice into our lives. We pray all of this in Jesus'

name, amen.

So what you find from verses eight to 20 is he keeps saying, if you see something and so Solomon is looking back at his life, and he's looking at his culture, and he's looking at how he and his own officials have actually led during parts of his reign as King. He says, I've seen some things and he's going to talk about the power of greed in culture. The first area that he looks at and he wants us to look at is government corruption that is due to greed. It's amazing thing for those of us who are in Christ. If you've trusted Jesus Christ, you need to know that the Bible says that you have been made a citizen of heaven, that one day you are going to be able to enjoy the Kingdom of God that you will enjoy the King Jesus ruling in justice and righteousness and peace forevermore.

That day is coming but that day is not yet. We are not able to fully enjoy all of the benefits of Kingdom living. We are still living here in this broken world. So God and His grace and His kindness has actually established a sense of order, knowing that we need it and it's government. You see, the Bible tells us that God has entrusted some of His power and authority to human authorities and government. We can read this in Romans chapter 13. In order to accomplish three things for the good of humanity, and you can see them here.

First is the government has been given authority to commend what is good, to echo what God says is good. When that doesn't happen, that doesn't mean that God's plan, that God's authority wasn't for our good. What it means is that officials are sinning. We're told there that the human government is supposed to look to God and says, okay, this is what You say is good and now we are going to remind the people that this is what He says is good.

They're all supposed to punish the evil. When someone breaks what is good, when somebody runs against, when somebody is hurting another people, then the Bible says that God has given them authority to punish those who are doing wrong. The third thing they're supposed to do is protect the weak, specifically from the flood of human sin that would bring about anarchy. To protect us from ourselves.

God in His grace, he says, This is what I have done. It's an interim plan until I fully established the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in heaven forevermore. What we know is that this idea of commending good and punishing evil and protecting the weak, we don't see it as frequently as we wish that we could. This is where he picks up in verse eight. He says, if you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at the matter for the high official is watched over by a higher and there are yet higher ones over them.

This means that good officials, honest officials, loyal, noble officials, have long been joined by a hierarchy of ungodly officials who love to dig into the cookie jar. You see, sometimes raising taxes doesn't raise quality of life for anyone except for ungodly officials who are getting stuffed on all the cookies, but notice what he says. He says if you see this, so not be amazed.

He's not saying it's right. He's saying it is. That under the sun, things are broken. That greed is going to capture people's heart. People who've been placed into leadership roles, places of authority, and instead of using their power in order to share it for the good of people, they use their power to get fat themselves. Solomon says this is totally messed up, he says, but it is the way that things happen is that crooked people never pave a straight road.

Then he gets into verse nine, verse nine says, but this is gain for a land in every way. A king committed to cultivated fields. Now to be honest with you, this is an interesting verse. In fact, most commentators of the Bible, they establish one verse that's the most difficult to translate in an entire book. When you come to Ecclesiastes, most commentators actually believe that this verse the one that stumps the most people. There's over 20 different translations, because we simply don't know exactly what Solomon was trying to communicate.

So I believe, I would simply say this is that although a king may profit from the field, meaning he's simply already talking about injustice. So a king could actually have fields, could employ people to work those fields and then steal all of the grain for himself, or at least most of it. That would be in line with verse eight, where it says that the officials that they continue to take from people and they oppress the poor, and yet there looks also to be a value in terms of agricultural community, in that at very least the community gains from meaningful labor and some grain.

That's my best attempt, but let me encourage you with something. What should we do with these two verses? I think it's this, is let's look to Jesus' coming kingdom for hope. Let's look to His coming kingdom for hope. That doesn't mean that we become no earthly good. I would simply tell you that when it comes time to vote that you should vote. When it comes time for us to play a part in the process, the stewardship of freedom that we enjoy in America, that we the people of God, that we should participate.

I want you to know that more than a blue or a red wave, in America or throughout the world, what we need more than anything else is a king that is trustworthy. A king who is benevolent, a king who is just, a king who is dignified in every way, a king who doesn't fear reelection because he's never elected, a king who, instead of forcing other people to carry him on their back, he places those people and carries them on his back.

See, I want you to know that behind every bumper sticker for a person or a party, every yard sign, every call into talk radio, every social media post that lionizes or vilifies a particular person or a political party, every time you sniff out any of those inclinations within the heart, I want you to know that what you're actually looking at is a deep longing in the soul for a leader named Jesus Christ.

There is no political party or candidate that we will see on a ballot that will fix this world. It is Jesus and Jesus alone. Of the increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end. That's what the prophet Isaiah said. That when we place our faith in Jesus Christ what happens is, He gives us hope, but He also begins to shape our life in such a way to show other people the goodness of God, and how He's organized and invited

us to live our life.

You see, we're told in Mark chapter 10, verse 43, His disciples, they're arguing over who's the greatest of the disciples, and instead of urging them to repent, of wanting to be great, He simply redirects their heart. He redefines what greatness is, and He says, Whoever would be great among you must be your servant. You see, Jesus is simply taking His own disciples back to the garden. You see, the Bible begins, I know we've talked about this many times, but it begins, in the beginning God created the heavens in the earth and He created us, humanity, in his image on the sixth day, and he gave us a relational virtue, and that is that our heart would be inclined to say that when we see another person, we would say, my life for your good.

My strengths, my abilities, my power, my authority, whatever it is that I have, I'm going to employ it for your benefit. Then suddenly we sinned against God, we broke fellowship with Him. We became thirsty and hungry in our soul. Do you know what the Bible says? It says that our very nature was reconstituted. We were changed inherently and the Bible says that, that relational virtue was so distorted that instead of saying, my life for your good, we began to look at other people and say your life for my good.

What Jesus is doing is He's saying, you know what, because I have come, because I've come to this earth, because I am the King of all kings. I am the Lord of all lords. You trust Me and I'm going to reorient your life, your heart, your motives, your inclinations, even your relational virtues back to a place that actually brings order out of chaos, that you're going to begin to look at all the authority that you have, whatever power you have, whatever wealth you have, whatever privilege you have and you'll begin saying, my life for your good.

This is the life that Jesus organizes. This is the life that He makes available because he died on a cross. For every one of us who were in Jesus Christ, this is the life, the relational culture that we will live within and heaven forever and ever and ever. So when you see the brokenness in the world, place your hope in the day, that one day that we are going to sit under a King who is perfect in every way and will change our heart in every way that we enjoy one another and serve one another for the benefit of one another and there will be perfect piece.

The second thing that he does is he wants to show us another impact of greed. So he looks out and he shows us the personal dissatisfaction that is due to greed. You see, Solomon at some point in his life, through all of his wrangling through all of his search for all of his sinning, Solomon learned that God made our heart to be dissatisfied with money when we make money our god.

So notice what he says here in verse 10. He says, whoever loves money, will not be satisfied with more money or with money. Nor he who loves wealth, with its income. He says, no, this is a broken thing. This is vanity, this is empty. What he's saying is so important, is that there is a destination for our love that does create a satisfaction, and money and wealth are not that destination.

If you love money, and you love wealth, he says then what's going to happen is your heart is going to be perpetually dissatisfied. Now God is not against money. Throughout the Bible, we actually find godly people who are wealthy, we find ungodly people who are wealthy. We find godly people who are poor and we find ungodly people who are poor. Money can be used for a million good, noble, God-honoring, Christ-honoring ways. It can buy food to feed people who are hungry. Money is not the problem. So God is not against money. God is against the love of money, and the reason that he's against the love of money is because God loves so much and anytime you love something, you resist what threatens what you love.

He looks upon us and He says, I love these people and so He looks and He goes, now what's threatening them? One of the things that threatens us is this deception that our heart buys into that says, even if I don't have God, if I have a lot of money, I'll have enough. God loves us so much. Do He reveals throughout all the pages of Scripture, it seems like this idea is just captured just book after book throughout the entire Bible when you find it right here.

He loves us so much. We see the same thing in First Timothy chapter six when He says, those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. If you look at this, and if you took out the word rich and the only thing that you could see is that there is something that is a snare, it's senseless, it's harmful, and this thing plunges people into ruin and destruction and God Almighty, the one who killed His own son for your good to demonstrate how kind and loving He is towards you, there's a good chance you would look at whatever it is up here and say, I don't want to do that. I don't want to be near that.

God Almighty Who loves you more than any other, He says, let Me tell you what is that Viper that you love to play with, and you just don't think it's going to bite you? He says it's the desire or love to be rich. For all the believing that we do in God, in Jesus, there are many people in Raleigh and even in Providence, who simply do not believe this.

Because we make it our attempt to be rich every day. So we need to be careful here because clearly He's not against money. So how does God's people handle money in such a way that there's redemptive ends with that money, and yet it doesn't plunge us into ruin and destruction? You see, so many people, what they do is they imagine an amount of money and it's kind of like this oasis in the desert where everything is dry, and they look out there and they go, man, if I could just make it to that spring, if I could make it to that amount. If I could make it to that kind of pleasure, then I would be so happy.

What they find is that that Oasis is actually a mirage in the desert, it's simply not there. Then he goes on in verse 11, he says when goods increase, they increase who eat them. What advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? You know what this means? It means once you get money, you get more people in your life who want your money in order to fund their mirage. You get more tax officials and Uncle Sam saying I want to tax you more.

It's only people with money who coin the phrase gold digger. You'll find is that rich people have a lot of friends, and you'll find when rich people lose all their money that they have very few friends. That's what Solomon is saying. Solomon's saying, as long as I have all this money, it just seems I got all kinds of people want to be near me. He looks out and he sees other people with means, with influence. There's always people that says you know what, I don't have what you have and maybe you can fund my mirage.

Well, he says, this can keep you up at night. So verse 12 says sleep or he says, sweet is the sleep of the labor. The word labor there, this is the day labor. This is just the simple employee. They go, they clock in, they work, they work hard, they sweat and they clock out and they go home. It says sometimes they don't have a whole lot to eat when they go to bed, and yet, because they've worked so hard, and because they're conscious is clear, because they've invested in honest, meaningful work, that they still sleep well.

He says, however, on the other hand, he says, the full stomach of the rich, and specifically he's talking about the ungodly rich, will not let him sleep. Why is this? You see, unlike the weary body and the clean conscience of the labor, the rich person, in particular, the person who made their riches and ungodly way may struggle with sleep, even with a full stomach because they're always thinking about their company, their competitors, and their conscience.

So, what do we do with this? Let me encourage you with this. Let me encourage you to trust Jesus Christ, and guard your heart. You see, I am convinced which is why I've said it more than once, the five minutes after we die and leave this earth and we see heaven, we're going to know how we should have lived. Because God loves us so much he's given us a Bible so that we don't have to wait to find out.

He tells us what we're going to learn when we see everything. He's going to tell us in His Word to take care and to guard to heart against greed. Luke chapter 12, verse 15, he says it this way, Jesus is saying, just take care and be on your guard against all greed, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

Friends, when you look at this, this is Jesus Christ. Just like literally a matter of months before He went to the cross to die for you, to demonstrate His commitment for your good. Jesus says that you and I are at risk, and therefore we need to take care and be on our guard. Friends, if God says that we're at risk, we are at risk. So consider, consider these things.

The third thing that Solomon points our attention to, is the destructive hoarding due to greed. You see, Solomon, what he's going to do in this next little paragraph is he's going to highlight two different hazards that we all face as human beings when we hoard. Now hoarding is different than saving. Let me explain the two. Saving is where you look out and you see a need. You look out and let's just say that you see a need that people need work. So you say, you know what I want to do, I want to be able to save, to be able to expand the business, to be able to hire 100 more people.

So the accumulation of capital for a purpose is not hoarding. Hoarding is when we stockpile things, and we do so in order to give us two things, an identity and security. Where we can look at our piles of stuff and say, this is who I am. This is how successful I am. This is how powerful I am. This is how meaningful my life is, and this is how safe my life is. This is how protected my life is. God says to us, hey, this is hoarding.

That's said, he talks about two different risks that come to our life. Two destructive things that happen to us when we hoard. Notice what he says in verse 13, he says there is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun. Riches were kept, and the word kept is the same word, hoard. Were kept or hoarded by their owner to his hurt. If you hoard, stockpile for your identity and security, it will cause you hurt.

This is God saying this, we need to believe Him. You've seen probably a show or have heard of a show. It's called Hoarders. Actually, it's a TV show. They go into people's houses who have a true, systemic problem with hoarding, and you just look at their house and it's just piles and piles of stuff. Sometimes this is trash, but they can't bring themselves to get rid of anything because it's their identity and security. They gather and gather until what they gather overtakes their life.

He says, but there's another problem. There's another problem than simply our own hurt. He goes on and this is what he says, and those riches, those riches were lost. He goes, this is the other problem with hoarding, is you're going to lose them. Sometimes people will take them, but then there's another problem that actually ensures that you're going to lose them and it's death. Notice what he says, he goes, and those riches were lost in a bad venture.

So you had them, you could have used them for a noble, God-honoring purpose, but you didn't because you were hoarding them and he goes, and as a result of that, he goes, they were lost in a bad venture, and he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. As he came from his mother's womb, he shall go again. That means with nothing, naked as he came, and shall he take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. You see what he's saying?

He goes that one day you will lose everything. Some people will lose some of what they have at some point in their life, but everyone will lose everything at the end of their life. So we should take care how we live, for it will be lost. Then he goes on in verse 16 and 17. He says, this also is a grievous evil and he's going to restate it. He says, just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind. Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness and much vexation and sickness and anger.

Now this last verse, this is so important. This verse, verse 16, simply rephrases what is before and that is, listen to me, you're going to die, and you're going to have to leave it all here. So maybe you should think about how you should live with it while you're here, knowing you're going to have to leave it but then what he does is he says, now let me tell you what happens to the person who doesn't. It's such a sad portrait, these words here.

These words, he's speaking to somebody that says I am going to hoard. I'm going to create piles of stuff so that I have an identity and a security. I'm going to ignore the obvious that I might lose some of it, and I'm going to die and one day lose it all. He says, and these are the words. He says, moreover, all his days he eats in darkness, in much vexation, and sickness and anger. What does that mean? It means that there are some people who are simply so fearful of losing their money because it's their identity and security.

They're so fearful of a stain forming on their carpet or their couch because somebody spilled food on it, that they come home from a day's work, they eat in the dark, so nobody knocks on the door, while clutching all their stuff with a frown on their face until they die and leave it all behind. There's a better way to live. To be rich in friends with dirty carpet is a far better life.

So let's trust Jesus and learn to be a giver. Nobody loves you like Jesus, and nobody sees our future as perfectly as Jesus. With that in mind, Jesus says to us in Matthew chapter six, verse 19, do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves break in and steal. You see Jesus is for us. He tells us throughout His word, He gives us this amazing blueprint that we looked at last year in a three week series.

He says, this is what I want you to do. I want you to give generously and I want you to save wisely, that means not hoarding, but saving for a purpose to bless others and then to live appropriately so that we can keep giving. You see Proverbs chapter 11 verse 25 says, whoever brings blessing will be enriched, meaning that the generous person, what you're going to find is that your life is all the richer because you gave some of your riches away, and the one who waters will himself be watered. So I urge you to believe Him. Providence, believe Him. He's for you.

The last thing I want you to see, and this is the good news, we finally get like, okay, this is really discouraging. This last one is how we're supposed to live with riches, and food and drink and work, and what he wants to do is he highlights this pleasant contentment that is due to God's grace.

You see, sometimes what God has to do in our life to serve us is He has to wreck our vision, so that we're open to seeing another one. So he spends all these verses to be able to help us to see that this is not the path that we should live in order to open up our eyes to this reality. Now notice what he says. Verse 18, behold what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment, and 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.

Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his law and rejoice in his toil, this is the gift of God. For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart. You know what this says, I just love this. He's so good to us. I just love how God gives us both the peaches and the can opener in life.

He could only give us one, He could give us wealth but no ability to enjoy the wealth. He could give us good food but we have no capacity within us to be able to enjoy the food. He could give us the capacity to enjoy it and yet make us not eat and have no job, but God in His grace and His goodness, you know what he does? He gives us both. Because we need both, and only God can give both.

See our first parents in the garden, Adam and Eve, they started all the trouble of this broken world when they ate without God. We perpetuate the trouble in the world, because we eat, drink, work and live without God. When we live without being mindful of God, we create selfish ambition which creates chaos. It's what happens.

So Jesus Christ, the Son of God was promised, all the way back in the garden. He says one day the rescuer is going to come, and throughout the Old Testament, what we find are all these clues that says, you know what, one day there's going to be somebody who's going to come from beyond the sun, and He's going to come live under the sun. He's going to restore purpose and meaning, He's going to restore that relational virtue that makes life work again. He's going to give us peace. He's going to give us hope, He's going to give us everything that we need, and that Jesus came to this earth and He was ignored by everybody.

He was rejected by nearly everybody. He lived without sin, in perfect love and yet people just like us, nailed Him to a cross, and there the Son of God willingly gave up His life in order to pay the debt of our sin. Versus eight through 17 is what life would be like forever without Him. Yet, there's a possibility for more and it's because Jesus came and there, He died on that cross and He was buried in a grave, and Jesus rose from the dead.

When He did, He simply said, would you believe? Would you admit you can't save yourself and stop trying? Would you place your belief in Me, your trust in Me, confess Me as Lord? I'll forgive you of all of your sin, I'll bring you back into a relationship with Me and then you will be able to enjoy life out of the fullness that I provide, instead of always looking at these oasis that are actually a mirage.

So just notice what he does. He says that, God's plan, once we come to faith in Jesus Christ, is that we are to eat and we are to drink, and we're to enjoy our work in a relationship with God. When you're in a relationship with God, what happens is your heart gets so full that you don't ask food and drink and work to be your god because you already have a God. Then you look at the next slide and actually think goes on, and he says, and not only that, but God wants us to enjoy our wealth, whatever it is, our possessions, whatever we have, and whatever power that we have, whatever authority or influence we have, and we're supposed to do this in a relationship with God.

This is a gift from God, and not only that, he even goes a step further, this is just such mercy. He says, for he will not much remember the days of his life because of God. You know what that means? Every single one of us we have days in our life we wish we could forget and yet we keep bringing them into our today. He says, but when God forgives us of our sin through Jesus Christ, then He keeps us occupied with joy in our heart,

and we don't spend all the rest of our days imagining how horrible we are as sinners.

We don't spend all of our days looking back in our days in regret, feeling that our conscience is pricked, like we're going to be condemned before God because He says there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ. So let me encourage us to trust Christ as our Savior and then to go on trusting Him. Have you trusted Him? Have you believed in Him? Have you confessed Him as Lord of your life? You can do that right now, and if we can help today, you can send us a text. You can write PBC1 and send it to 31-31-31 and we will follow up with you today, if you want to talk about what it looks like to follow Jesus Christ and to know a peace that passes understanding.

You'll be able to enjoy the goodness of life's highs and lows. The last verse I want you to see is where we started. This phrase, this lesson of the whole chapter is actually a verse in the New Testament. First Timothy 6:6 says godliness with contentment is great gain, and what that means is this, is that when we have a heart that is so full of God, that there's simply no room for greed, it's absolutely priceless. So I commend you to Christ.

So we pray. Father in heaven, we thank You for Your love for us. We thank You for the hope that we have in Jesus and we thank You for the life that you have given us because of Jesus. I pray for everybody who has listened. I pray for those who are far from You. I pray for those who are running after money thinking that money or possessions is going to satisfy their soul, and I ask that You would rescue them, I ask that You would help them to believe. God, help them to believe Your word.

God, I pray for Your church family that you would help us to grow, to grow in faith that will propel our obedience, to grow our faith that will propel our generosity to help us to grow in faith that will propel our love for one another. So I pray, Father, that as we sing to You now, we confess that You're greater, You're just better, You're better than everything. Life makes sense when it's lived with You. So we worship You now, we sing to You now with a full heart. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen.



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