

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

Brian Frost

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Meaning(Less)

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9

TITLE

Tug Of War

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Ecclesiastes 8:1-17



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Yeah, can I get a tow?

Sure. What's your location?

Where did my money go? Never mind.

So you don't her?

Well, it's great to see you Providence family and guests. If you're in the room if you're at home on live stream, I want to say thank you for actually being here and for joining us. Turn with me into your bible to Ecclesiastics chapter eight. If you're new here with us, each Sunday as we gather we always open up the bible, which is Gods word. And we're in a book which is actually, if you've never read this book, you might be surprised to hear that it is really perplexing. And if you have read it, you may, like many people, look at it and go, "I just don't know what to do with Ecclesiastics because it's just so complex. It seems like there's so many different ideas and they're call connected together but I have no idea how they connect." But I want you to know that God in his grace has given us this amazing book, it's packed away there in the Old Testament. And it's absolutely jam-packed with truth and wisdom for living.

And what I hope that you know, whether you're at home or here, is that when we open up the Bible, when we open up the Bible individually, when we open up the Bible as church family, it is among the most sacred things that can happen in the week. And for sure, it is among the most formative thing, most impactful things that can happen to our life because the Bible is the word of God. And he has the power to change our lives so we want to pray to him now.

Father, I ask that you would do just what your word says, that it always does when we receive it with meekness. And that is that you would not only cut us, but you would heal us. And that you would not only convict us, but you would encourage us and build us up. I pray God that you would expose in our hearts every area of sin that you desire to address through Ecclesiastics 8. I pray that you would address our hearts with every area of obedience you want us to give. And I ask God that you would be gracious to us. We know that your word has power, so would you do a miracle, the miracle that only you can do. And that is would you cause our hearts to find a tremendous amount of interest in what we're about to read. Would you help us to be curious? Would you help us to lean in? Would you help us to understand?

And then Father, would you do what only you can do, would you convince us of its accuracy, that it is trustworthy and true? And would you give us courage to apply it to our life? I ask Father that you would do a miracle, that you would change peoples hearts. I pray for those that are far from you. Maybe those who are here in the room or maybe at home and just examining and looking at the claims of Christ and the life of Christ and what it meas to be a Christian. I ask Father that even through this text that at first glance may seem so strange, God that you would convince us of the greatness and supremacy of Jesus Christ above all. And I

pray for those who are far from you Lord, that they would bend their heart and their knee and they would confess you Lord of their life. And so we look to you in faith. I ask that you would speak through weakness and do only what you can do. And I pray this in Jesus name, amen. Amen.

Well most of us, like this picture, we feel like the little red part of the rope in a game of tug-of-war. Every new issue, every new social cause, every new act of injustice, every new COVID update. Every new notice from the school system or from your work or from your church or from the government. What it feels like, is because what is true, is you got a bunch of people and they run to the rope. And some people, they grab the rope and they pull to the right and some people, they grab the rope and they pull to the left. And we are in the middle. We are in the middle to where we have to then discern. And you have to understand, we have to discern why it makes this so difficult today, is we have to discern under pressure. There are people who are wanting to convince us, wanting to persuade us, wanting us to join their cause pulling to the right or to the left on a great number of things. And yet, we are left in the middle.

And what we have the responsibility of doing is identifying what is true and what is false. And then within what is true, what is right and what is wrong. And then to have an understanding of how we should respond as individuals. And this is the gift of Ecclesiastics. What God does through this man named Solomon is he gives us invitation to pursue wisdom. Now when you hear the word wisdom, and you think of a cartoon. Or the idea of wisdom and you think it in terms of movies. What you think is this man whose up in the Himalayan Mountains and he's sitting cross-legged. And he's up on a rock and he's spouting riddles and these wise sayings. And that's not what the Bible means when it talks about wisdom.

Solomon, in another book called Proverbs, he says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. What this is means is that a wise person, they understand that this is not our world. We didn't create this world. We don't sustain this world. That we're here for a time and then our time is over on this world. But there is a God, the creator of the universe. And we open up the pages of scripture, his word. And suddenly, what we find is we find a written revelation of who he is. And wisdom begins with an understanding of who God is, not who you are. You're never first, I'm never first. We come to the table, we say, "Okay God, I want to know who created this place. I want to know whose in charge of this. I want to know the heart of the one who created because what was created resembles the heart."

Creativity and excellence and what we find in the pages of scripture is that the creator of the universe is sovereign over all things. He's omnipotent, he's on the present, he's on mission. We find within scripture that he is holy and he's righteous and he is just and he is the savior of the world. We find all these truths about him and wisdom takes God into account as we look at the world. But once we understand who he is from the page of scripture, then he welcomes us to see who we are. That we are created in his image to have a relationship with him. That we were all born at his will. That we live under his purposes. And one day we will die at his timetable.

And when you understand these things, then all the sudden you say, “Okay, now I know who he is. I know who I am. Now how do I live in his world?” And what wisdom from scripture is, properly defined, is simply having understanding and knowing how to apply it to everyday life. Where we recognize the complexities of what’s happening all around us in society, in culture, in school systems, in governments, in justice systems all over the world. And a wise person knows the truth of who he is, the truth of who we are and how to live in his world. And it changes the way that we live our life.

And this is precisely where Solomon, the King of Israel, goes first. Notice what he says, verse one of chapter eight. He says, “Who is like the wise? The answer is nobody. They’re in a category among themselves.” And then he says, “Who knows the interpretation of a thing?” You know what that means? It means when you’re under pressure, people are pulling from the right and from the left, and you have to discern what’s true and what’s false and what’s right and what’s wrong. A wise person is able to do that. They’re able to interpret what’s happening in the world. What God words says, this is what wisdom does.

And then notice what he does. He says, “A mans wisdom makes his face shine and the hardness of his face is changed.” Now what he’s saying here is this, that when a person is wise, when we know who God is, when we know who we are. When we know how to live in his world, what happens is it creates this peace and this poise in the way that we live our life. And do you notice where this peace and where this poise is expressed? Look what it says, on our face. Now the face is simply a reflection of the heart. What he’s saying is that a wise person, they’re heart is governed by peace and poise when they look out on the world. And that peace and poise that resides deep within the heart, it finds expression on peoples face.

Have you seen people in the midst of just absolutely chaos and you find a face and it’s just a face of poise? It’s comforting isn’t it? Yet you look around the world today and what do you see? You see a lot of people and you don’t see very much poise. If we’re honest with ourselves, we could look in the mirror and we don’t see a lot of poise. You see what happens is, we get information. A lot of our information we get is from technology. And suddenly we have to absorb that information. And so we’re processing, we’re thinking about what this means and what it says. And almost for all of us, our first instinct, our first reaction is not poise and peace. Our first reaction is either anger or frustration or confusion or perplexity. We just don’t know. And so what happens is our face, it gets hardened. It looks hard, it looks perplexed. It looks like it’s tense.

But do you see what wisdom does? When wisdom has time in our heart and we give wisdom it’s place in our heart, notice what the text said. It says that our face begins to shine. What that means is there’s a change. There’s a change in our countenance. That our face, at one time was not shining. Now wisdom allows us to actually shine. And not only that, it says that when we receive information and it causes that sternness and that hardness and that confusion, and I just don’t understand what’s happening or maybe that anger, that rage. It says that wisdom can actually change our face. And the reason is because it can change our heart.

And you see, Solomon, who is writing chapter eight, in fact he's writing the entire book. You have to remember, he's an old man now. This is grandpa Solomon, okay? So if you remember the storyline of Ecclesiastics, Solomon the King of Israel. He's utterly blessed by the Lord and yet his heart walks away from the Lord. And he goes in searching throughout the world for meaning and for hope and for peace. And what he finds is dead end after dead end after dead end. And so at the end of his life he writes a letter. And it's this letter, Ecclesiastics, it's a book. It's written in the hope of doing two things. One is to show you every door that he's come out of and saying there's no hope within this room. I know you want to go in here. I know you think that this is the place of satisfaction and peace and purpose. But I want you to know this is a dead end. I've already tried it with unlimited resources.

But not only that, he wants to teach us the lessons that he's learned so that we do not have to emulate his error. And so what he's going to do here in chapter eight is interesting. Grandpa Solomon sits us down and what he wants to do is to show us how wisdom produces poise on our face during three very difficult situations that we find ourselves in life. You're going to find how pertinent this even to our day now. The first one that he wants to look at is wisdom produces poise while under authority.

Now if I ask you to raise your hand if you love being under authority. If you raise your hand, you would be lying to me, right? We don't like authority. We don't like people telling us what to do, what to think, what we can do, what we can't do. To be honest, we get honest, right, our first parents, Adam and Eve, they didn't like to hear it from God, right? So it really shouldn't surprise us that we don't like to necessarily hear words of instruction, authoritative statement that we have to abide by while we're here on the Earth from other men or women that we know are fallen just like us.

Being under authority is hard. And yet the Bible says that it's part of God's economy. Within the home, there's children and there's parents. And the parents are the authority within that home. You go to a courtroom and all sudden there's a judge who is the authority of that room. You go to a classroom and you find a teacher or a principal or administrators who are the authority within the school. You go to a city or a state or a country and what you find is leaders. You find mayors and governors and senators and congressmen and women and you find presidents and vice-presidents. You find authority figures in our life.

Now what Solomon wants to do for us is he wants us see now when you're in those environments, and I know you don't like authority over you, how do you respond? How does a person of wisdom who has peace and poise within their heart so much so that it spills out their face, how do they respond to these things? This is where he starts, notice what he says in verse two. He says, "Keeps the Kings command because of God's oath to him." Keep the Kings command. Now you can translate, children obey your parents. Students, obey your teacher. Citizens, obey, respect, submit, keep the governors command, the mayors command, the law enforcement officers command.

His first invitation to us as people of wisdom is, look for an opportunity to yield to the authority in our life. And then he tells us why. He says, "Because of God's oath to him." What that means is that God is in this thing called authority. God gives parents to the home, to the children. Romans 13:1, he talks about like this in government, he says, "Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except that which God has established." But the Bible recognizes that our authorities, that government is only as just as the people who are holding those seats are just. And since every single one of us has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, what that means is that we're all fallen, we're all broken, we're all weak. We get all confused, we all make bad decisions from time to time. And there are people just like us who have authority over us, and yet they have to make a decision and sometimes their decision is not that great.

And because we live in a fallen world where a heart is sometimes sinful, sometimes throughout history and even in our country, the government is actually laid down rules that are in violation of God's word. So what are we supposed to do then when an authority requires that we sin? Meaning that obedience to the man made law, if obedience to it would actually equal disobedience to a divine law. Well God's provision is civil disobedience. When I say civil, it means civility, okay? Burning down a Wendy's is not civil. Throwing a brick through a window is not civil. Civil disobedience. If it's not civil disobedience, it's sinful disobedience. And God cares about that. And so God give us this thing called civil disobedience.

We see various examples of this within the scriptures. You remember in Daniel chapter three, there's this king, he believes he's a God. He creates this enormous golden image and he says, "Now when you hear the instruments play the music, everybody in the entire country, I want you to bow down and worship." Instruments play, people bow except for three. There's three godly men that says, "You know what? I can't bow. I recognize that there's a consequence. This fiery furnace, I'm going to be thrown into it. But God says I cannot worship any except him. I am not going to bow my heart or my knee in worship to a piece of gold. I'm not going to do it." Now when they didn't, they didn't throw a brick at the idol. They accepted the consequence of that fallen king. They said, "I can't obey you but I'll still submit to what now you have the authority over me."

The same thing happens, kids, if you have parents and your parents say, "You know what we're going to do? We're going to rob a bank." You have a responsibility not to yield to them, not to submit to them because God says don't steal. In that moment, which maybe an interesting conversation right, you can say, "You know what mom and dad? I want to obey you, but I have to obey God. And what you're asking me to do is sin against God. And so I can't do that. And if there's a consequence that you're going to give to me, then under the Lord, I'm going to receive that." But the same thing happens in the school room. The same thing happens within the city and within the state.

And so Daniel, the three men, of course you see these example. But isn't it true, friends, that the vast majority of our resistance to authority is simple due to the fact that we don't like being told what to do from man or God. I mean it really shouldn't surprise us very much that we struggle to submit to one another because we look at the authoritative king of heaven and Earth who created us in his image and we say no. Well if we're

going to resist submitting to God with our sexuality or with our relationships or with our money or with our life, our work. If we see, okay this is what he wants and then all the sudden tomorrow we're like, no. Well it shouldn't surprise us that we struggle with authority with other people that we know are not God.

And so because most of our resistance today and the resistance that I get has nothing to do with sin or righteousness before God if obey the rule of man. Solomon wants to unpack his truck in terms of how a wise person would respond. And so notice what he says in verse three. First thing, "Be not hasty to go from his presence." Now, you remember, in their context, he's the king so people come into his throne room, he delivers a verdict. And so he says, "Now look, you hear what you don't want to hear, don't be hasty." This is like quick exist because of anger, right? Your busting through the doors, you're throwing bricks and you're ranting and you're dropping some bombs. And you're going home and you're getting on social media, here's my half baked rant for the whole world to hear. Maybe not.

The same thing would be if you're in the principals office or you're in your parents room. When you're in the presence of authority and authority that God has installed over your life and you don't like what you hear. He says the first thing this, "Be careful how you plan your exist." Let wisdom produce poise in your life. In this moment, this is not the end of the world. God is still on his throne, he's still the king. One day I'm going to be in heaven with him forever. I don't need to do something that's really reckless and wrong right now. I live under his rule. I live under authority, under his command. Let wisdom give you poise.

He goes on and he says, "Do not take your stand in an evil cause." What does that mean? And evil cause is actually a plural thing. It's more than one person. It's normally a group project. And this is true. Resistance to authority typically grows into being a group project, right? Well, I'm angry. Hey, are you angry? Oh, you're angry too? Hey, let's be angry together. That's typically resistance to authority, right? It grows into a group project where we're finding other people who are sensitive and sympathetic to our offense. You have that offense too? Let's be offended together.

And then he says this, he goes, "You better though take careful. Do not take your stand in an evil cause." What is he saying here? He's saying choose your group wisely lest you be standing among fools doing something that God calls evil. What does that mean? It means if you join a group because they have a cause of 10 people, then you're associating yourself with the lowest common denominator in terms of wisdom and folly within that group. So if there's nine wise people and one idiot in your group, and that one foolish person is behaving in sinful ways, well you are now associated with evil.

So you be careful the cause you join and the group you join. Because groups typically, when they don't understand the fear of God, they form a mob. And this is true about mobs, whether it's on a Facebook mob where you're like, "Well, everyone's doing it so I have to post something. Otherwise it's going to look like I'm not a part of it." Or the mob is on the street. They typically have a pee wee grasp of Gods truth, a junior varsity grasp of culture and a professional level of pride. So choose your cause wisely for not every cause is just and

not every group who has a just cause is worth joining. But let wisdom give you poise.

Why? Verse three continues, “He does whatever he pleases.” This is the king. “For the word of the king is supreme and who may say to him, ‘What are you doing?’ Whoever keeps the command will know no evil thing.” Now let’s stop here just for a second because we keep reading. Whoever keeps a command will know no evil thing. The command is from the king, the authorities. This is what he’s saying, while it’s true in this broken world that people can be and are falsely accused and then sometimes wrong convicted because the world is broken. The majority of times is this, the majority is if you don’t rob the bank, you won’t suffer the consequence. The words know no evil can also be translated, suffer no disaster. You don’t break the law, there’s a better chance in the world of not suffering the consequence and the disaster of doing so.

Then he keeps going and he goes, “The wise heart will know the proper way,” I’m sorry, “proper time in the just way. For there’s a time and a way for everything, although mans trouble lies heavy on him.” What does this mean? It means this, is that when we look out on the world and we see Gods commandments and his priorities and his glory and his word being violated, and it causes our hearts to feel trouble. When we feel trouble within the world, unless obedience is direct disobedience to God, he says it’s best to yield to what you’ve been asked to do. And as you yield, you begin to look for the proper time and the just way to make a change in the world.

When you see commandments being broken, don’t try to make it right by breaking commandments. You do right, so what he’s saying is don’t sin in order to make things right. You remember David. You remember David, God comes to him through a profit. He’s not even asking for it and he goes, “Hey, you’re going to be the next king.” Pour some water over his head, you’re going to be the next king. Well Saul is king and Saul becomes jealous of David so he begins hunting down his life. And one particular time he hunts him down, David’s hidden back in a cave with all his men. Saul doesn’t know he’s in there. He takes a little nap and all the sudden David’s men, his little entourage that quickly turned into a mob, he says, “You know what, hey, kill him and you’ll be king.” And David recognized that Saul was not a godly man, he was not a godly king. Trouble filled his heart as he looked at Saul’s rule and the decisions that he was making in life. And yet he knew that he was not the sovereign over the universe. He knew that he lived under the sovereign in the universe and so he chose a proper time and a just way.

And notice what he said to his men, “I will not put my hand against the Lord anointed.” I will not sin in order make things right. So Solomon is saying know who you are and know whose you are and do what is right and let wisdom give you poise. Do you know it’s so important? Because verse seven and eight says, “For he,” meaning the wise, this is the wise person now, “The wise person does not know what is to be. For who can tell him how it will be.” You know what that mean? It means you don’t know stuff that’s happening in the world and neither do I. You would not know as much by looking at people’s social media feed and they’re expressions and evaluations of their authority and of their leaders. We look like, when we post, like we know everything.

And Solomon says, “You don’t don’t as much as you think you know because you can’t know.” He says, “Look, no man has power to retain the spirit or power over the day of death. There is no discharge from war, no will wickedness deliver those who are given to it. What does this mean? These are interesting words. Retain can also mean restrain, it means to pull back. The spirit, this word spirit is also translated wind or breath. It’s the breath of life. So this is what he’s saying, you ready? He saying there’s not a single one of us who have power over life and death. And unlike a war where you can put in some paperwork and have a discharge from the war, nobody gets a discharge from dying. And because that’s the case, unlike this world where wickedness is sometime delivered, when you stand before God when you’re dead, it will matter that you did not choose sin to make things right. It will matter.

And so he finishes and he says this, “All this I observe while applying my heart to all that is done under the sun. When man had power over man to his hurt.” It’s interesting, this his, you really have to study what his is. Is this the kings hurt? It is. It’s actually to his own hurt. He’s actually here throwing it right at the very end. He goes, look, things are busted up. Here’s the deal, when you have a tyrant as a pastor or a tyrant as a parent or a tyrant as a governor or a king, he says, “They use their power instead of to serve other people, they use it to protect their power and they push people down.” And he goes, “And unknowingly, they actually hurt themselves.”

And so for us, in particular most of us are not authorities. If you are, be careful with your authority. But since most of are not, or at least all of us have somebody that’s over us in some realm in life, let me encourage each one of us to trust God by respecting our authorities. You don’t have to like your authorities to honor them. You don’t even to vote for them, you don’t have to emulate them, you don’t have to imitate them. But notice what 1 Peter 2 says, “Be subject for the Lords sake to every human institution.” Isn’t that interesting? It doesn’t say be subject for the kings sake, but subject for your parents sake, be subject for your sake. He says, “Be subject for Jesus sake.” Meaning when you yield to another individual in ways that are not sinful to God, Jesus Christ looks at that and says, “Well done good and faithful servant.”

And then he goes on and he says, “Now let’s talk about how we do this. We honor everyone. We love the brothers,” that’s the church, Christians brothers and sister, “we fear God, honor the emperor.” Did you know that the emperor, when Peter in Rome, the emperor called himself a God. He didn’t respect him in terms of wanting to be like him. But no, he says, “You know what? We need to honor the emperor.” So we honor, we pray surely adding derogatory titles to their names and blasting their every decision is not endearing them to our savior. And so let’s trust God by respecting our authorities and allow wisdom to give us poise.

Second thing he talks about is wisdom produces poise during injustice. We have all seen really bad things happen to good people and really good things happen to bad people. And this is precisely where Solomon lands the plane on this point in verse 14. He says, “There’s a vanity that takes place on Earth. There are righteous people to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked. And there are wicked people to whom it happens to accord the deeds of the righteous. And this is all vanity,” he says. See what he’s saying?

Bad stuff happens to people, it should happen the other way around and yet things are broken here on the Earth. Sometimes really, really wicked people have a ton of people at their funeral. And sometimes the most godly have nobody.

You remember Eric Liddell? Was in 1924, he won gold medal in the Olympics. God placed such a burden in his heart for people who have never heard about Jesus. So he left family, he left fame, he left all of his comforts. He goes to China and suddenly World War II begins. He's placed into a concentration camp where he dies alone of cancer at 42. No funeral. One of the godliest men.

And Solomon goes, "All right, so what do we do with this? And this is what he does, he goes, "Don't forget something, justice is coming." And one of the ways we know that is because we're all going to die. And death is the surety. Once you die, you're going to face judgment. And what he does is he goes, "Let's just talk about three different kinds of wicked people on the Earth and let's remember they're all going to die." Verse 10, "Then I saw the wicked buried. They used to go in and out of the holy place where they were praised in the city where they had done such things. And this also is vanity." What does that mean? Sometimes wicked people are also hypocrites and they can put on a great face and they're honored at church. It looks like they're getting away with it. Solomon says, "Oh, they're not going to get away from it." You know why? Because eventually they're going to die.

He goes on, he says, "And because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the heart of the children of man is fully set to do evil." What does that mean? It means that those within our culture who are embolden to do evil because justice is delayed, one day they too will die. And then he goes on, verse 12 and 13, "Though a sinner does evil 100 times and prolongs his life, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God because they fear before him. But it will not be well with the wicked. Neither will he prolong his days like a shadow because he does not fear before God." You know what that means? It means those people in life who sin 100 times over and it seems like there's absolutely no consequence that ever visit them for their wickedness, one day they will die.

And the Bible says it is appointed that man die once and then what? Face judgment. Justice is coming. And a person of wisdom looks at this world, and suddenly that acknowledgment that we are going to stand before God and he's going to make all things right. He will make all things straight. And on that day they will be straight forever. It creates poise in our heart and poise upon our face.

Do you know Christ? The reason this is so important is this, after this is judgment. You see, Gods justice may be delayed because he's waiting for people to repent. But it will not be denied for Jesus Christ himself, Matthew 25 says, "When the sun of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him and he will sit on his glorious throne." And that parable goes on, and he says, "And he will separate people. Some to heaven who trust him and all the rest to hell." And so let's fear God and run to Christ. Do you know why? When we think of the fear of man, we think if something is scary on this side of the room, fear tells us to run to that side of

the room. But in this case, the case that visits all humanity is this, we have sinned against a holy God, a perfect God, a righteous God, a just God and he's angry about it.

Let's just say he's over there. When we normally think of somebody, that's a risk, that's a threat to us and he's over there, then where do we go? We go over there. But let me ask you something. What's going to protect you from the Almighty? Only the Almighty's provision. The only thing that can protect you from the wrath of God is the mercy of God. And in his love, what he did was he provided a provision in Jesus Christ his son. He came to this Earth, he lived without sin, he died on a cross for our sin. He was buried in a grave and three days later he rose from the dead. He says, "If you trust in me, I will take away all of your sin. I'll forgive you and I will give you my righteousness." You see the only way for us to have an appropriate wisdom in life is to fear God enough to run to him instead of away from him. It's all about being near the Lord.

Everything in your life, whatever problem you have. I promise you, the very first solution is to run to Christ. It's just the reality of how he's built the world. We have to be near him. He came in love. He loved the world so much that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. So my question is, have you trusted him? And you can trust him today. We would love the opportunity to talk to you about that.

There's an opportunity we're going to have here in just a few minutes after I finish the last point, which is very brief, and then we're going to pray. We're going to be able to see somebody whose baptized, Her name is [Kristen 00:38:26]. It's going to be so encouraging. It's been a long time since we've seen someone baptized in this room. And this is simply somebody that says, "You know what? I recognize that I'm in need of Christ." My question when you're watching is this, do you need to confess Christ as your savior and Lord just as she has?

The last thing I want you to see that he does in the last three versus is this, is that wisdom produces poise during uncertainty. Many of us struggle to enjoy blessings when we're perplexed. I can tell you this for sure in my own life is that when I feel uncertain about things, sometimes I'm at work and there's a number of scenarios that are taking place, a number of people, a number of counseling scenarios where literally it just begins to weigh heavy on me. Sometimes the grief of other people, the pain of other people, it just weighs heavy. In particular when I don't know how to fix things, sometimes I take that home. And what I do sometimes when I take it home is I don't want to eat and I don't really want to talk to my family, which is an enormous tragedy. And this is what he's talking about, is sometimes the uncertainty in life, it threatens our ability to enjoy Gods blessings during that moment. And yet Gods blessings are limited in terms of the number of those blessings while we're here on the Earth.

What that means is this, for those of you who have a family and you eat with your family, one day you won't. You have kids in your house, one day they won't be in the house. And so there is a number, a limited number of those moments that you need to take advantage of. And yet, when we feel confused or frustrated, sometimes we don't really take advantage of what's in front of because we're confused about other things. And so this what he says, he says, "And I commend joy for, man has nothing better under than the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through days his life that God given him under the sun." Sometimes you're like, "How in the world can you eat and drink and be joyful when everything's so busted up?" He says, "A person of wisdom will have enough peace within their heart that poise will form on their face and they'll even be able to eat a good meal when their heart is struggling to understand things that are happening around them."

He goes on, it's interesting what he says, he goes ,now, when are we supposed to be having all this good time? Is it when everything is fixed and we understand everything in the world? No, look, "When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business that is done on Earth, how neither day nor night do one's eyes see sleep, then I saw all the work of God that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun." And he goes on, "However man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out. Even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out."

You see what that means? You don't get all the answers in life and neither do I. And if that creates such a strain within your heart because you don't have wisdom within your heart that says, "You know what? One day I'm going to see Christ. One day he's going to fix all these things. One day there will be clarity." And what will happen with this, is that you will shortchange the blessings in your life. Don't let what you cannot understand destroy what you can enjoy. So trust Christ and enjoy his blessings. As you enjoy, don't make the mistake of mistaking the gift and the giver. All the gifts of God, they're only good so long as you enjoy them within the context of having a full heart because you know Christ is your savior.

So let me pray for us. Father in heaven, I pray that you would build within our hearts a wisdom that would create peace and poise within our heart and that peace and poise would spill out of face. We pray that as we have that peace and poise that people would ask us why, how? How do you even look peaceful during these day? Would you give us courage to be able to point people to our savior in Jesus? I pray now, Lord, I'm going to pray for every one of us, God. You give us courage to become people of wisdom. I pray now Lord as we're encouraged by hearing the story of a life that you changed in Kristen and to see here be baptized, that you encourage our hearts and our soul. We pray in Jesus name, amen.



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