

Ecclesiastes 6 Enjoyment! True North, Part 6

Intro: There is a difference between Happiness and Joy.

A) Happiness is based on Happenings –

B) I am Happy when my team wins the game, happy
Rite aid has Choc Chip

- 1) Happy when the Bible study goes well
- 2) Happy when my kids are doing well
- 3) Happy wife is in the mood.
- 4) Happy – Bills are paid.

C) **Doesn't take a lot to make me happy!**

1) Happiness is based on Happenings

Joy is something deeper – Joy will at times involve happiness.

A) But you can have Joy in the midst of the most adverse circumstances.

B) But Joy is an experience which connects us to that which is "Greater" than we are.

1) Therefore Joy is an inner peace and contentment that comes from the Lord.

C) But this something that we need to understand – **God wants us to experience times of happiness.**

1) Why he created things for us to find pleasure in

But God ALSO wants us to understand – Joy is found in Him and in Him ALONE! Christian Hedonist

A) Here in Ch.6 Solomon deals with the futility of seeking to find **Joy apart from God**

B) And misunderstanding the difference between Joy and Happiness.

C) In the book of Eccl King Solomon is giving us a self Portrait –

1) Painting of his life apart from God.

I enjoy Biographies to a certain extent – but here is my problem with them.

A) Usually written by **A FAN** – Pedestal – this person who walked on water – { Very discouraging

B) That is why I prefer a good auto-Biography – **especially honest writer.**

1) A little more realistic – tell me about the time he prayed for 3hrs but also about the **times** fell asleep

C) That is what I like about the Bible is it presents its Hero's **WARTS AND ALL!**

Solomon paints this self portrait to warn and to instruct!

A) Been said – We learn by experience – **OURS – OR SOMEONE ELSE'S**

B) Smart person learns from others mistakes

Eccl 6:1-2 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: 2 A man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor, so that he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires; yet God does not give him power to eat of it, but a foreigner consumes it. This is vanity, and it is an evil affliction.

A) The **paradoxical situation** described here is commonly found among the affluent.

B) Solomon is making note that wealth comes from God – **he blesses with the ability**.....

C) But that God is also capable of keeping us from enjoying it!

1) End of V. 2 **he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires; yet God does not give him power to eat of it, but a foreigner consumes it. This is vanity, and it is an evil affliction.**

D) Note **a Foreigner consumes** them or enjoys them

Now the foreigner is not identified here- so let me take the liberty to give some ideas:

A) It could **have been an adversary**, some personal enemy who gave the king grief.

B) Thorn that kept him from enjoying his blessings

1) Like a daunting shadow.

It could be sickness: He once enjoyed good health and now that foreigner has attacked his body.

A) It can no longer enjoy the delights of riches and wealth and honor.

B) It could be **domestic conflicts** – there is nothing like trouble at home to take the fun out of life.

C) It could be **natural calamity** – Storm – or something .

D) So a foreign force – invades the situation making enjoyment impossible.

Now here is the mistake that most pp make at that point – instead of turning to God – they think – something is missing.

A) I mean I should be enjoying life right now – but I am not – why ?– I know – I need this

B) A lot of young wives think – **BABY** – Solomon addresses that false assumption next –

3 If a man begets a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with goodness, or indeed he has no burial,

“Suppose a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that he has a long life, but he fails to enjoy himself; then, even if he were to [live indefinitely and therefore] never be buried, I say that it would be better to be born dead.” CJB Complete...

The Pt is Children are not the answer!

A) Lots of kids –brings lots of challenges –
Challenges that aren't solved the longer you live.

B) Solomon finishes his thought here with a sort of morbid – analogy!

V.3b I say that a stillborn child is better than he —4 for it comes in vanity and departs in darkness, and its name is covered with darkness. {Not name them – easier to forget}

5 Though it has not seen the sun or known anything, this has more rest than that man, 6 even if he lives a thousand years twice — but has not seen goodness. Do not all go to one place?

A) The baby that was never born that has no history is better off than the man who has 100's of kids but wasn't able to enjoy them –

B) Because that Baby now dead – has no problems to endure – Challenges of life.

C) Morbid idea at first glance – but a closer look not so morbid.

I will never forget when Jon Courson's daughter Jessie died in a Car accident.

A) Jessie was a vibrant 17 year old girl – radical love for Jesus and a depth in the Lord.

B) Jon joked – that they would have a hard time finding a man for her to marry –

1) Deep enough and mature enough to lead her.

C) Jessie had a passion for heaven – she longed to be with the Lord – Journal writings revealed

D) When she died - Jon held up a ring – said - "One of the things I have most looked forward to, as a pastor and father, is being able to officiate at the wedding of my daughter. And today, I am doing so. Today, my Jessie has found that Man to lead her. Today, my daughter is the bride of Christ."

Jon went on the share that as hard as it was to think about life with out her – there was another thought he had – Now she won't have to experience all the pain problems – grief – that comes with living in this sin plagued world.

That is the right Perspective – this life is the Prelude to the Story The Forward– Eternity is the real deal!

That is the sentiment of Solomon here

The answer is not in Kids or more yrs
Nor is it Hard work / nor more Education

7 All the labor of man is for his mouth, {to fill the mouth,} And yet the soul {appetite} is not satisfied. More work – harder better achievement – NO That doesn't bring satisfaction to an empty life.

8 For what more {What advantage} has the wise man than the fool? What does the poor man have, Who knows how to walk before the living?

Not more education – learning more –

Solomon seems to Shout out at this point in V. 9 Stop Dreaming!

V.9 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of desire. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind.

A) Here is what Solomon is saying: Come to terms with Reality!

B) It is ok to Dream! – Think of where we would be without Dreamers – Cars/ Planes/ Cell Phones

1) **Disneyland**

C) Walt Disney presented his ideas – Board Great – scrap it – wasn't grand enough

D) Walt Disney died before Disney world in Florida was completed – On opening Day in 1971 – almost five yrs after Disney's death someone commented to Mike Vance "To bad that Walt Disney didn't live to see this.

Vance simply replied: **He did see it – that is why it is here.**

Dreamers are great – but if all they do is dream and they never walk in reality – Problem !

A) Better to deal with reality – than to just sit back and dream of a better day!

B) Tired of waiting around – time to take action – time to move forward.

C) The answer is not in a dream – Some people want to live in a dream world and never face reality.

D) Dreams at times can be just grasping at the wind.

So now Solomon comes back into the frame of his Self Portrait or his autobiographical sketch.

A) He speaks from the heart of God as he makes three observations.

10 Whatever one is, he has been named already,

Observation #1 God is Sovereign.

B) At the heart of life's major struggles is a theological issue.

C) It really boils down to this question: **Is God in Charge or is He not?**

D) **That is the issue!** – My Bible tells me that God is in Charge – Creator / sustainer –

1) Puts pp in office – controls the affairs of men.

He allows sinful man to run amok – to do what is right in his own eyes.

A) Romans tells us – Part of God’s judgment is simply giving man over to his natural desires – **Homosexuality**

B) To experience the emptiness and futility of life apart from Him –

C) But even in that **He is Sovereign!** He is in Control
1) Sovereignly gives man a choice!

If we were able to be transported right now into heaven – Here is what you WILL NOT FIND.

A) You will not find an atmosphere of Panic or Anxiety.

B) Easy to find here isn’t it! – Oh no what is going to happen?

1) There is no anxiety in heaven over the affairs of men!

C) You will never hear the words: OOPS out of the mouth of God.

1) Fred Boshaw – hair cut – GI Joe

D) Never hear that from God – he will never say – golfer slice – *that one got away from me*

No we would be stunned by the awesome sense of calm and peace mingled with incredible majesty and power- Intimating from the throne of God!

That is what the picture looks like from that side of HEAVEN! – DL Moody – favorite saying in heaven will be – OH.....! – Now I understand

A) But this side of the tapestry is sometimes confusing to us.

Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly, shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needed in the Weaver's skillful hand, as threads of gold and silver in the pattern life has planned.

B) From this side of eternity we see the tapestry from the back side – doesn’t make sense to us.

C) Makes no sense that a 45yr old mother of 3 dies of cancer. – Mandy 2 wks ago.

1) Daughters senior year – at graduate.

D) Makes no sense to us – woman who wants kids can’t have them.

1) Gal **make a great wife – still isn’t married.**

E) Makes no sense to us – lose Job / house

Psalm 19:9

**The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.**

That is written by a guy who hard life – 15 anointed – 15 yrs fugitive – why ? Answer Sovereign T&R

A) That is the resounding song being sung by the host in Heaven in Revelation 16 again 19

B) True and righteous are your judgments

1) Not saying that because forced – have to – it is the ultimate perception from the heavenly perspective.

C) Everything God does – the way He does it – is Right!

That is when my heart can be filled with Joy in the midst of difficult and adverse circumstances –

A) Joy is an experience which connects us to that which is "Greater" than we are.

B) That which is greater is God Himself –

1) Seeing him not only as the author – but also as the Hero - Hope Lord you will deliver

C) **John Hofland – Lord heal or Take!**

D) So even when the foreigner invades – Joy – God is sovereign –

1) Job 1:21 **Give and take away – heart will choose to say: Blessed be your name!**

E) Only the man/ woman believes in the Sovereignty of God can say that!

Observation #2 Mankind is not Sovereign:

V.10b For it is known that he is man; {we know what man is!

A) Let me put it another way: God is the potter we are the clay. – not the other way around.

B) We are not molding God – He is molding us – His image.

C) **God is infinite we are finite**, God is all powerful, we are limited in strength and ability.

1) God is faithful, we are unfaithful and inconsistent

Pt is clear God is Sovereign and we are not that leads to the third observation: Disputing with God is a waste of time and effort!

A) **CS Lewis** put it this way: To argue with God is to argue with the very power that makes it possible to argue at all.

B) Isaiah put it this way:

Isaiah 45:9-12

“Does a clay pot dare argue with its maker, a pot that is like all the others?

Does the clay ask the potter what he is doing?

Does the pot complain that its maker has no skill?

10 Does anyone dare say to his parents,

"Why did you make me like this?"

11 The Lord, the holy God of Israel, the one who shapes the future, says:”

"You have no right to question me about my children or to tell me what I ought to do!

12 I am the one who made the earth and created mankind to live there.

By my power I stretched out the heavens; I control the sun, the moon, and the stars."

TEV

How foolish of me to think I can question God.

A) Swindoll: "When I find myself getting anxious it is usually because the size of mankind has gotten greater than my size of God. The horizontal has overshadowed the vertical, and I have momentarily lost sight of Him who is still on the throne."

Concludes

V 12 For who knows what is good for man in life, all the days of his vain life which he passes like a shadow? Who can tell a man what will happen after him under the sun?

**Answer is God: He is Sovereign – He is my portion
My Joy is connected to the depth of my connection to Him.**

Who for the Joy that was set before Him Shame

Tonight Cross reminds us – Sovereign plan

Christ was crucified ... foundation of the world

Reminded of His Faithfulness

He who began a good work faithful to complete it

**Justification –Finished – Sanctification – process
Miracle moment process life time**

Reminded of His love –

Perfect love cast out fear – Loved us enough to give us the best – freely give all things

Lives built on the Rock tonight!

A) Anxious? Horizontal overshadowed the Vertical

B) See Him in His Sovereign plan

1) Unfailing love

C) His unending grace and mercy!