

The "Good" Life

What is the highest quality life we can pursue?

Introduction

- The "good" life today as in times past is defined as a life filled with material things and earthly pleasures
- God is either excluded or called on to validate an unrestrained life revolving around fulfilling all desires
- Chase after as much pleasure and material things you desire no matter what you have to do

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Introduction

- If not careful, Christians may be deceived into believing materialistic, selfish life is the "superior" life
- In contrast, God has revealed the good life as He defines it for which we have been created and redeemed
- In Ecclesiastes, Solomon provides the contrast between what appears to be the good life and the life God demands

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God Blessed Solomon With Great Wisdom

1Ki 3:7 "Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

1Ki 3:8 "Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted.

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God Blessed Solomon With Great Wisdom

1Ki 3:11 God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice,

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God Blessed Solomon With Great Wisdom

1Ki 3:12 behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you.

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Life Without God – A Tiresome Routine

Ecc 1:4 A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever.

Ecc 1:5 Also, the sun rises and the sun sets; And hastening to its place it rises there *again*.

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Life Without God – A Tiresome Routine

Ecc 1:6 Blowing toward the south, Then turning toward the north, The wind continues swirling along; And on its circular courses the wind returns.

Ecc 1:7 All the rivers flow into the sea, Yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers flow, There they flow again.

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Life Without God – A Tiresome Routine

Ecc 1:8 All things are wearisome; Man is not able to tell *it*. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor is the ear filled with hearing.

Ecc 1:9 That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun.

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Life Without God – A Tiresome Routine

Ecc 1:10 Is there anything of which one might say, "See this, it is new"? Already it has existed for ages Which were before us.

Ecc 1:11 There is no remembrance of earlier things; And also of the later things which will occur, There will be for them no remembrance Among those who will come later *still*.

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Human Wisdom Not The Answer

Ecc 1:16 I said to myself, "Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge."

Ecc 1:17 And I set my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I realized that this also is striving after wind.

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Human Wisdom Not The Answer

Ecc 1:18 Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge *results in* increasing pain.

Ecc 12:12 But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion *to books* is wearying to the body.

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 2:1 I said to myself, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself." And behold, it too was futility.

Ecc 2:2 I said of laughter, "It is madness," and of pleasure, "What does it accomplish?"

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 2:3 I explored with my mind *how* to stimulate my body with wine while my mind was guiding *me* wisely, and how to take hold of folly, until I could see what good there is for the sons of men to do under heaven the few years of their lives.

Ecc 2:4 I enlarged my works: I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards for myself;

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 2:5 I made gardens and parks for myself and I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees;

Ecc 2:6 I made ponds of water for myself from which to irrigate a forest of growing trees.

Ecc 2:7 I bought male and female slaves and I had homeborn slaves. Also I possessed flocks and herds larger than all who preceded me in Jerusalem.

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 2:8 Also, I collected for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men--many concubines.

Ecc 2:9 Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me.

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 2:10 All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

Ecc 2:11 Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 5:10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance *with its* income. This too is vanity.

Ecc 5:11 When good things increase, those who consume them increase. So what is the advantage to their owners except to look on?

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 5:12 The sleep of the working man is pleasant, whether he eats little or much; but the full stomach of the rich man does not allow him to sleep.

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Entertainment Pleasure and Riches Not The Answer

Ecc 7:2 It is better to go to a house of mourning Than to go to a house of feasting, Because that is the end of every man, And the living takes *it* to heart.

Ecc 7:3 Sorrow is better than laughter, For when a face is sad a heart may be happy.

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Work Hard and Enjoy God's Blessings

Ecc 2:24 There is nothing better for a man *than* to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen that it is from the hand of God.

Ecc 2:25 For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him?

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Work Hard and Enjoy God's Blessings

Ecc 9:9 Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.

Ecc 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with *all* your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.

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Self-control and Composure

Ecc 10:1 Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom *and* honor.

Ecc 10:2 A wise man's heart *directs him* toward the right, but the foolish man's heart *directs him* toward the left.

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Self-control and Composure

Ecc 10:3 Even when the fool walks along the road, his sense is lacking and he demonstrates to everyone *that* he is a fool.

Ecc 10:4 If the ruler's temper rises against you, do not abandon your position, because composure allays great offenses.

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Be Generous and Help Others

Ecc 11:1 Cast your bread on the surface of the waters, for you will find it after many days.

Ecc 11:2 Divide your portion to seven, or even to eight, for you do not know what misfortune may occur on the earth.

Ecc 11:3 If the clouds are full, they pour out rain upon the earth; and whether a tree falls toward the south or toward the north, wherever the tree falls, there it lies. 25

Be Generous and Help Others

Ecc 11:4 He who watches the wind will not sow and he who looks at the clouds will not reap.

Ecc 11:5 Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones *are formed* in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things. 26

Be Generous and Help Others

Ecc 11:6 Sow your seed in the morning and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good. 27

Good Life – Fear God and Keep His Commandments

Ecc 11:9 Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things.

Ecc 11:10 So, remove grief and anger from your heart and put away pain from your body, because childhood and the prime of life are fleeting. 28

Good Life – Fear God and Keep His Commandments

Ecc 12:1 Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no delight in them";

Ecc 12:7 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it. 29

Good Life – Fear God and Keep His Commandments

Ecc 12:13 The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.

Ecc 12:14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. 30