

February 25, 2024

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

by Ken Weliever

For the past several weeks, I have been teaching a Wednesday night class on the book of Ecclesiastes.

The Preacher in Ecclesiastes searched for what is good in life. For true happiness. And ultimate satisfaction. He pursued pleasure. Possessions. Wealth. And wisdom. Yet, all of these were fleeting. And found wanting.

Tonight, is our final lesson, and through all the advice on how to live life on this earth, the challenges and uncertainties we face, and the perplexing problems we cannot always understand the Preacher concluded that the "whole of man" is wrapped up in the will of God.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.

For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

In his book, "Living on the Ragged Edge," Charles Swindoll offers this observation about this passage. "The thing I love about Solomon's conclusion is there isn't a ruffle of drums, a loud blast of the horns, and screaming clarinets with a crescendo of passionate emotion. There's just a simple statement. And Solomon doesn't try to be fancy about it either. When the conclusion has been heard, when it's all been said, it

literally reads, "Fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person."

The Preacher reminds us of three simple, but important points.

#1 Take God seriously.

Fear God. Respect Him. Honor Him. Revere Him.

It's been observed that Ecclesiastes ends where Proverbs begins when Solomon said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;

fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. 1:7).

Neither this command nor the book of Ecclesiastes itself guarantees that we will enjoy a perfect life of ease, or understand all the "why" questions of life. Paul Earnhart in "Searching for the Meaning of Life" expressed it this way. "We may not be able to understand and explain all the mysteries of God's providential working here below, but we must not let that steal from us our reverence for and trust in Him as our Creator."

Paul further reminds us "We are creatures designed by Him and He alone knows the purpose of our lives, and what will give us ultimate fulfillment." That means I must take God seriously.

"The remarkable thing about fearing

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Ladies' Class - Tuesday, February 27 at 10 a.m.

Our Next Gospel Meeting is scheduled for March 24-27 with David Raif

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

God,” wrote Oswald Chambers, “is that, when you fear God, you fear nothing else; whereas, if you do not fear God, you fear everything else.”

#2 Take God's Word seriously.

“Keep His commandments,” is imperative. When we fail to respect the Word of God and do our very best to follow its instructions, we're not taking God seriously.

It would be like a child who claimed to love, honor and respect their parents, but blatantly refused to obey their rules. Warren Wiersbe wrote, “The fear of the Lord must result in obedient living, otherwise that “fear” is only a sham. The dedicated believer will want to spend time daily in Scripture, getting to know the Father better and discovering His will.”

Like the Psalmist, our attitude toward God's Word should like the Psalmist who penned, “I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love” (Ps. 119:47).

Jesus expressed it plainly and pointedly, “If you love Me, keep my commandments” (Jn. 14:15).

#3 Take seriously Judgment Day.

Why should I fear God? Why should I keep His commandments? Because there is a day of judgment coming “that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad” (2 Cor 5:10).

The Preacher has already made that observation when wrote, “God shall judge the righteous and the wicked” (Eccl. 3:17). And to the young when he warned, But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment” (Eccl. 11:9)

We will all stand before God. It is a judgment one cannot escape. In that day there will be no hiding. No one will be overlooked. And everyone will be

judged individually. Not as a group or a church. Or a nation. Each person will receive just judgment from the Great Judge.

When my Mom was diagnosed with multiple myeloma her first response was, “Well, we're not put on this earth to live forever.” Such is the conclusion of The Preacher. Life's ultimate purpose is not wrapped up in “life under the sun.”

Indeed there is “the present life and the life to come” (1Tim. 4:8).

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Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson's lymphoma has returned and is suffering cognitive and balance issues.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues.

Don Simmons is still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

Debbie McMurray is isolating at home after her therapies and compromised immune system.

Terry Behrns is recovering at his sister's home

Elaine Kersh is in Granite Mesa Room 308.

Sylvia Stinnett broke her wrist and is recovering.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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