

Question: What is keeping us from truly enjoying life?

WATCH YOUR STEP

Ecclesiastes 5:1–7

¹ Guard your steps when you go to the **house of God**. Go near to **listen** rather than to offer the **sacrifice of fools**, who do not know that they do wrong.

² Do not be quick with your **mouth**, do not be hasty in your **heart** to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. ³ As a dream comes when there are many cares, so the speech of a fool when there are many words.

- **IN PRAYER**, LINK YOUR MOUTH AND HEART (cf. Matthew 6:5-8)

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. ⁵ It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it. ⁶ Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, “My vow was a mistake.” Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? ⁷ Much dreaming and many words are meaningless.

- **WORDS** ARE NEVER A SUBSTITUTE FOR OBEDIENCE (cf. Matthew 7:21-23)
- WORDS HAVE **CONSEQUENCES** (cf. James 3:5)

I CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION

⁸ If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things; for one official is eyed by a higher one, and over them both are others higher still. ⁹ The increase from the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields.

- **OPPRESSION**

¹⁰ Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

- AN INSATIABLE **APPETITE**

¹¹ As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them?

- THE ADVERSITY OF WEALTH: **TRUE FRIENDS**

¹² The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep.

- **RESTLESSNESS**

¹³ I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: **wealth hoarded** to the harm of its owner, ¹⁴ or **wealth lost** through some misfortune, so that when he has a son there is nothing left for him. ¹⁵ Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand. ¹⁶ This too is a grievous evil: As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind?

- **CONTROL** IS UNCERTAIN AND BRIEF

¹⁷ All his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger.

- **ISOLATION**

How are we to find enjoyment in this life

For further study . . .

1. Sacrifices take on new meanings in the New Testament. Read the following verses and reflect on what they are communicating:
 - a. Our bodies, Ro 12:1-2
 - b. A devoted people, Ro 15:16
 - c. Money, Phil 4:18
 - d. Praise and good works, Hebrews 13:15-16
2. A conversation about wealth is a difficult conversation. However, we were exhorted to listen, to heed God's counsel, that life may go well. Therefore, consider the ramifications of God's counsel on wealth.
 - a. Deuteronomy 8:14-18
 - b. 1 Timothy 6:6-10
 - c. Matthew 6:19-21