

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

ENJOY LIFE

Nicolas Edwards

One lesson to learn from the book of Ecclesiastes is to enjoy life under the sun. *“There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God”* (Eccl. 2:24). With the right perspective, man can live many years, and rejoice in them all (Eccl. 11:9)! Enjoy life:

NOT LIVING FOR MATERIAL THINGS. The Preacher discovered life was not about human wisdom, fulfilling one’s own pleasures, great works, possessions, riches, or labour. Concerning these things he said, *“all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun”* (Eccl. 2:11). Apart from God, these things do not satisfy or fulfill man. A life centered upon material things is vanity! This will not bring lasting value. All of these things are corruptible, temporary, and will be burned up (Mt. 6:19-20; Heb. 11:25; 2 Pet. 3:10). Too many cannot enjoy life because they are living for material things.

BY BEING GOOD IN GOD’S SIGHT. *“For God giveth to a man that is good in His sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner He*

giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit” (Eccl. 2:26). Apart from God, man truly cannot enjoy life. Apart from God, all is vanity. Enjoy life by being good in God’s sight!

REALIZING GOD IS IN CONTROL. Man is limited. There are things we do not know (Eccl. 3:11). God has created an order of things that we can not change: the activities and seasons of life that each generation experiences under the sun. *“To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven”* (Eccl. 3:1). Through the activities of life, God accomplishes His purpose. *“He hath made everything beautiful in His time”* (Eccl. 3:11). Knowing this, we are to trust Him, not defy Him, live according to His created order of things, rejoice, do good, eat and drink, and enjoy, fearing God (Eccl. 3:12-14).

KNOWING JUDGMENT IS COMING. The Preacher often speaks of the judgment that is coming. He saw injustices and oppressions in this life, wicked in the place of judgment and iniquity there. But he took comfort knowing God is higher than they are and they will be judged for their works (Eccl. 4:16-17; 5:8). The young man

will be brought into judgment (Eccl. 11:9). We are all to live this life knowing, *“God shall bring every work into judgment”* (Eccl. 12:14).

FEARING GOD AND KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS. *“I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before Him: but it shall not be well with the wicked...because he feareth not before God”* (Eccl. 8:12-13). *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”* (Eccl. 12:13). This is what life is all about!

From Ecclesiastes, we learn to enjoy life we cannot live selfishly. Living to please self, or heap up much to self, is a miserable life of vanity! To enjoy life we must deny self (Mt. 16:24), be content (Heb. 13:5), be thankful for what God gives us (Col. 3:15), fear and obey Him (Eccl. 12:13-14; Acts 10:35). In light of these things, whenever a man exchanges spiritual things for worldly things, such as forsaking the assembling for a sports game, they are making the worst decision. Do not exchange what really matters for vanity (Luke 12:15). To enjoy life under the sun, look above the sun!

SPIRITUAL MEMORIALS

John Edwards

With tomorrow being Memorial Day, a federal holiday for honoring and mourning U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces, it is a good time to call attention to some great memorials of the Bible.

THE RAINBOW. After the flood waters asswaged, God set His “*bow in the cloud*” with the promise, “...*neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth*” (Gen. 9:11). The beautiful rainbow is a memorial. The Lord said, “...*the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant...and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh*” (Gen. 9:14-15).

THE PASSOVER. Smiting all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, God instituted the Passover as a protection provision for His people to “...*not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you*” (Ex. 12:23). It was said, “*And this day shall be unto you for a memorial...*” (Ex. 12:14). “*And it shall be for a*

sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes...” (Ex. 13:9). The annual Passover observance was a reminder of the Lord bringing them out from the land of Egypt.

THE SABBATH DAY. The Ten Commandments included Sabbath keeping. “*Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy*” (Ex. 20:8). Deuteronomy 5 tells why God commanded Israel to keep the Sabbath: “*And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day*” (v. 15). The Sabbath was a memorial unto Israel to remind them of their deliverance from Egypt.

TWELVE STONES OF JORDAN. God memorialized the Jordan River crossing. Twelve stones of Jordan were taken for a memorial. Joshua 4:6-7 records, “*That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it*

passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.”

THE WOMAN WITH THE ALABASTER BOX. Matthew gives an account of “*a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment*” and pouring it on Jesus’ head (Mt. 26:7). Do you know what the Lord said about this? “*Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her*” (Mt. 26:13). She is being remembered this very moment!

THE LORD’S SUPPER. The Lord’s supper was instituted by Jesus Himself. He “...*took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me*” (1 Cor. 11:24-25). This great memorial is observed “...*upon the first day of the week...*” (Acts 20:7).

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