

Wisdom from Solomon

Eccl 7

A good name is better than precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one's birth; 2 Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is the end of all men; And the living will take it to heart. 3 Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. 4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. 5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise Than for a man to hear the song of fools. 6 For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, So is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity. 7 Surely oppression destroys a wise man's reason, And a bribe debases the heart. 8 The end of a thing is better than its beginning; The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. 9 Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools. 10 Do not say, "Why were the former days better than these?" For you do not inquire wisely concerning this. 11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance, And profitable to those who see the sun. 12 For wisdom is a defense as money is a defense, But the excellence of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to

those who have it.

13 Consider the work of God; For who can make straight what He has made crooked? 14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, So that man can find out nothing that will come after him. 15 I have seen everything in my days of vanity: There is a just man who perishes in his righteousness, And there is a wicked man who prolongs life in his wickedness. 16 Do not be overly righteous, Nor be overly wise: Why should you destroy yourself? 17 Do not be overly wicked, Nor be foolish: Why should you die before your time? 18 It is good that you grasp this, And also not remove your hand from the other; For he who fears God will escape them all. 19 Wisdom strengthens the wise More than ten rulers of the city. 20 For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin. 21 Also do not take to heart everything people say, Lest you hear your servant cursing you. 22 For many times, also, your own heart has known That even you have cursed others.

23 All this I have proved by wisdom. I said, "I will be wise"; But it was far from me. 24 As for that which is far off and exceedingly deep, Who can find it out? 25 I applied my heart to know, To search and seek out wisdom and the reason of things, To know the wickedness of folly, Even of foolishness and madness. 26 And I find more bitter than death The woman whose heart is snares and nets, Whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God shall escape from her, But the sinner shall be trapped by her. 27 "Here is what I have found," says the Preacher, "Adding one thing to the other to find out the reason, 28 Which my soul still seeks but I cannot find: One man among a thousand I have found, But a woman among all these I have not found. 29 Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes."

Don't forget about our radio program. The broadcast is every Sunday morning from 8:00-8:45 on the HUM. The station can be found at 98.5 in Columbus and 98.3 in Seymour.

Daily Bible Readings

If you have any suggestions on a Bible reading plan we can do together next year let me know.

The Outline is Online

Don't forget that the outline is also available online. Download a copy now.

Blog

This week's blog in on "joy busters." We are looking for God's solutions to modern-day joy busters.

Blessings of Contentment

Contentment Produces Joy

Points to Consider

1. Contentment Eliminates Joy Busters
2. Contentment Finds Joy in Little Things

Contentment Eliminates Joy Busters

Joy Buster #1 – Debt

Debt is one of the biggest issues facing our nation and our families. Our nation owes over \$17 trillion dollars! That is over \$56,380 per citizen. My family has six American citizens in it, so we owe over \$338,280.

The average client seeking the help of a counselor has \$43,000 in debt, of which, \$20,000 was consumer debt, and \$8,500 was revolving debt.

Deut 15:1-6 *At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release of debts. 2 And this is the form of the release: Every creditor who has lent anything to his neighbor shall release it; he shall not require it of his neighbor or his brother, because it is called the Lord's release. 3 Of a foreigner you may require it; but you shall give up your claim to what is owed by your brother, 4 except when there may be no poor among you; for the Lord will greatly bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance — 5 only if you carefully obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today. 6 For the Lord your God will bless you just as He promised you; you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you.*

The release from debts was intended to help the _____.
God told the children of Israel that if they followed Him they would lend to and _____ over many nations.

There is a _____ between lending and reigning in reference to nations.

Deut 28:15 *But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you... The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. 44 He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.*

God considered borrowing to be a _____.
When the nation disobeyed, other nations would be the head and they would be the _____.

Prov 22:7 *The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*

The borrower is _____ to the lender.

2 Kings 4:1 *A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves."*

A _____ man died having a lot of debt.
His creditors were going to take his sons to be their _____.

Matt 18:23-27 *23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.*

Debt is a joy _____!

Joy Buster # 2 – Resentment

Est 5:9-13 *So Haman went out that day joyful and with a glad heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, and that he did not stand or tremble before him, he was filled with indignation against Mordecai. 10 Nevertheless Haman restrained himself and went home, and he sent and called for his friends and his wife Zeresh. 11 Then Haman told them of his great riches, the multitude of his children, everything in which the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the officials and servants of the king. 12 Moreover Haman said, "Besides, Queen Esther invited no one but me to come in with the king to the banquet that she prepared; and tomorrow I am again invited by her, along with the king. 13 Yet all this avails me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."*

Haman was so resentful of Mordecai that he could not _____ his blessings.
Resentment is a joy buster that contentment helps _____.

Examples of resentment

- Cain resented Abel.
- Sarai resented Hagar.
- Saul resented David.

Gen 31:1-3 *Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth." 2 And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before. 3 Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."*

Laban's sons resented Jacob's _____.

Joy Buster # 3 – Vain Pursuits

Ecc 2:10-11 *Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor. 11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I*

had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.... Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun was distressing to me, for all is vanity and grasping for the wind. 18 Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who will come after me. 19 And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will rule over all my labor in which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also is vanity.

Solomon was always _____ for something that would make him happy.
This pursuit was vain.
As a result Solomon _____ life and his labor.
Life was _____ to him.

Ecc1 5:10 *He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity.*

The person who loves silver will _____ be content regardless of how much silver he has.
Contentment helps us _____ the vain pursuit of money.

Contentment Finds Joy in Little Things

Ecc1 5:12 *The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; But the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep.*

Contentment makes our sleep _____.

Ecc1 6:3 *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, I say that a stillborn child is better than he.*

Contentment helps us to be content with _____.

Ecc1 3:12-13 *I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, 13 and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor — it is the gift of God.*

Contentment helps us _____ the good of all our labors.

Ecc1 4:6 *Better a handful with quietness than both hands full, together with toil and grasping for the wind.*

Contentment helps us _____ enjoy the small blessings of life.

Ecc1 6:9 *Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of desire. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind.*

Contentment helps us enjoy what we _____ instead of wanting things we don't have.