

SERMON OUTLINE Ecclesiastes 8:14-17

Eat, Drink, and Be Joyful...Again

INTRODUCTION

MORE VANITY (14)

A REASONABLE RESPONSE TO VANITY (15)

MORE VANITY STILL (16-17)

CONCLUSION

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

The big idea of this sermon is that while God works in ways that don't always make sense to us, they are always good and there is joy in the mystery. The main takeaway for us is to stop trying to find joy through understanding God's purposes in our circumstances and start finding it through believing God's promises for our circumstances.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. Thinking back on last Sunday's sermon, have there been any ways you've grown in the fear of the Lord?
3. What's the most significant expression of under the sun vanity you've experienced? How did you respond?
4. Can you think of a specific time in which you really, really wanted to know what God was up to in some aspect of your life?
5. Where have you seen the godly people experiencing persecution and wicked people being celebrated? How did you feel when you saw it? Have you ever personally been on either end of that?
6. What do you make of the Preacher's "Carpe diem" commendation? How is it good/bad to find joy in eating and drinking?
7. Do you ever find it hard to reconcile the pain in the world with the goodness of God? Have you thought/read much about this?
8. What, specifically, gives you peace when confronted with wickedness, injustice, or other evils?
9. While God rarely reveals His specific purposes for our suffering, He does reveal it at specific times in the Bible and gives us general principles about working good in it all. Are you more helped by the Bible's specific examples or general principles?
10. How does the Lord's Table change your view of the Preacher's charge to eat, drink, and be joyful?
11. In what way/s did the sermon help you see the greatness of God?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

12. Spend some time checking out the links in Pastor Dave's manuscript pointing to recent court cases against Christians.
13. Ask God to show you an area of your life in which you are afraid to act in righteousness for fear of persecution.
14. Take the time to praise some specific act of righteousness this week.
15. In prayer and action, look for a way to stop wickedness this week.
16. Have a meal with good food and drink and invite someone to join you in it. Take time to thank God together for it.
17. Memorize a promise of God concerning His good work in your bad circumstances. Share it with someone.
18. Pick an aspect of God's work in the world that you'd like to know more about and find someone to help you with it.
19. Ask two different people in your family or DG (1) One thing they got from this sermon, and (2) How you can pray for them.
20. Pick one specific thing you mean to do differently, with the Spirit's help, as a result of the things you heard in this text/sermon.

PRAYER POINTS

21. Adoration. Praise God that His every act is wise and good. Praise God that He is righteous and just. Praise God that He perfectly delights in His glory. Praise God that He is entirely sufficient in Himself and for His creation.
22. Confess. Confess any ways you've doubted God's presence or goodness. Confess any indifference or sinful responses to either righteousness or wickedness. Confess finding joy in things apart from God. Confess any pride or cold-heartedness.
23. Thanksgiving. Thank God for giving us His Son, Spirit, and Word. Thank God for revealing to us everything we need to know. Thank God for His perfect faithfulness and justice. Thank God for fullness of joy in Jesus. Thank God for Grace Church.
24. Supplication. Pray for the protection and perseverance of any persecuted Christians you know of. Ask God to stop the wickedness of the wicked and to grant them repentance. Ask God to make you wise and give you contentment.