

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26

ENJOYING GOOD IN OUR LABOR

1. The Bible's concept of work is very much different from present day's understanding.
1. The general prosperity of the last 60 years has greatly changed man's understanding of work.
2. But "labor" (to work or toil) is a major duty of God's highest creature.
1. God created man to work (Gen. 1:28; 2:15) and to do so all day for six days.
2. Man's fall into sin made work difficult and laborious (Gen. 3:17b-19).
- Even though we labor in the midst of vanity, it is still something we must do and keep doing.
- The Bible's work ethic is redeemed so we can "enjoy good in his labor" (Eph. 4:28; 6:5-7)
- Work (like everything else under the sun) is vanity apart from seeking and serving Jehovah.
1. We can labor long and hard and be successful, but without God, it is all vanity (22,23; Ps. 90:10).
2. Further, the vanity of work and its fruits is that it is temporary and momentary (18,19,21).
3. This is true whenever we fail to look beyond our work to the heavenly and the spiritual and see God's purposes.
1. When I separate work from serving in gratitude my Savior and Lord, it becomes vanity.
2. Apart from God work (life) is vain (futile and empty).
- When one works unto the Lord, then one can "enjoy good in his labor" (24b; 5:18; 8:15).
1. What gives to work (and to everything else on the earth) worth or value?
1. See our earthly possessions as from God's hand – gifts He means for us to enjoy (I Tim. 4:4; 6:17; Ps. 104:15).

2. Grace enables us to find purpose in glorifying God, in working, in how we work, in for what we work.
- Work and labor is not vanity when we prayerfully serve (fear) God, aiming for heaven and its righteousness.
 1. The good our souls enjoy (24b) is “wisdom, and knowledge, and joy,” instead of “travail and vanity” (26).
 2. Work hard and then eat and drink and enjoy the opportunities to serve God and His kingdom causes.
 3. Then you will “know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (I Cor. 15: 58).