

01-09-09b Ecclesiastes

We're ready now to resume our study in Ecclesiastes chapter 6. This section is contrasting two possible conditions. We know from our study of the preceding chapters that there are lots of ways to wind up empty-handed. There are a lot of ways to stuff yourself with wind and find that you've not arrived at the substantial goals of life, in life.

In life you can wind up without your goals having been accomplished. Well, Solomon in this chapter says there is a calamity which I have seen under the sun in this brief life and it is numerous, it is multiplied upon man. A man to whom God has given wealth, riches and honor so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires but God has not empowered him, he does not have the ruling authority from God to eat from them.

Now this tells us that there is a difference between having something and being able to enjoy it, having something and receiving benefit from it. It's one thing to have a banquet table full of food, it's something else to be able to eat from it. And of course the King Midas story in ancient mythology is designed to illustrate that very point.

You can have a lot and yet not really. In the movies all the time you see where somebody has married some beautiful woman. She's the object of desire from all these different ones.

One guy gets her and he marries her but he can't keep her. Somebody else winds up running off with her before the movie is over. He's jealous and he frets and struts and does all these different things but his own pettiness and his own lack of being worthy of her, he somehow loses her.

I can't tell how many movies have been made about that. This is a commonly understood feature of human life, that you can grab a hold of something and possess it and yet not really be able to enjoy it. Or you work and slave and climb and you finally reach and attain something and it just turns to ashes in your mouth.

Well, what a tragedy. Solomon says this particular one of all the calamities that he has pointed out and all the evils that he has seen under the sun, this one he says is just multiplied. You see it everywhere.

It's common to man, it's just prevalent. God gives many people riches and wealth and honor so that their soul lacks nothing of all that they desire. But God has not empowered them to eat from it.

Instead, a foreigner consumes it. Of course, for Israel, this particular word for foreigner, this is anathema to an Israelite that somebody who doesn't even, the uncircumcised, these are the Philistines, the Syrians, the Egyptians, the unwashed masses of not God's people who are coming in and gaining the fruit. This just means it's worse than not having it.

Somebody else got it and it was rightfully yours. Again, I was reading this book on logic and there is a, I'll try to describe this for you very briefly, but there is what is known as the Monty Hall Dilemma. You remember the Let's Make a Deal show? And one of the classic features of that show is that somebody stands up out of the audience dressed like a chicken and Monty comes up and says, Let's make a deal.

He has the lady pull back the curtain and there's three doors down on the stage, door number one, door number two, and door number three. Monty says to the contestant, Behind one of these doors is a brand new car. Behind the other two doors there are goats.

So the contestant dressed as a chicken says, I'll take door number one. Monty says, Okay, fine. You select door number one.

But before I reveal what's behind these doors, let me show you what's behind door number three. He opens up door number three and there stands a goat. So now the contestant thinks, Well, the car is either behind my door or behind door number two.

Well, the question, and this actually was a question that was mailed in to Marilyn Vaucevant in her parade column back in the early 90s. Somebody said, Should the contestant stay with door number one or switch? What are the odds? Well, you would think you already know what's behind door number three, so it's 50-50. I mean, the car is either behind door number one or door number two.

Ninety-nine percent of the people, including mathematicians and statisticians and people with MIT degrees, all say the odds are 50-50. You can stick or you can switch. It's not really going to make a difference.

Marilyn, being this high IQ woman that she is, she replied in her original column, Your best odds are always to switch to door number two. Well, it's non-intuitive. It doesn't appeal to our common sense.

But if you think about it and think about the original choice, what are your chances before you know anything and you pick a door? You've got a one in three chance of being right, correct? You've got a 33 percent chance of being right. Well, that means you have a two-thirds chance of being wrong. So there's a two-thirds chance that once you pick door number one, there's a 66 percent chance that the prize is behind either door number one or door number two.

Well, Monty already opened door number three and showed you that there's a goat. So the 66 percent chance still applies to door number two. Your odds, and she illustrated it this way.

She said, suppose there's a lot more doors. She used the example of a million doors. Let's scale it down a little bit.

Let's say there's 20 doors. Monty has the contestants stand up. And so there's 20 doors.

One of them has a car. Nineteen of them have goats. So you pick door number one.

Well, Monty opens all of the other doors except door number 13 and shows you that there's goats behind all the other ones except 13. Now, which one do you think is more likely to have a car behind it? The one you originally picked where you had a one in 20 chance of being right or the only door Monty did not open and showed you goats behind all the others? How fast would you switch from door number one to door number 13 in that scenario? It is far more likely that Monty, being the knowledgeable host, knows that the car is behind door number 13 than that you had the luck in a one in 20 chance of getting it right the first time. Well, just scale the numbers down and it applies when you only have three doors.

My point in bringing this all up is, first of all, we have to be careful about going with our gut instinct. But this was such a fascinating problem and so many mathematicians and statisticians and people with PhDs at MIT and everything else got this wrong and mailed in and were all in a huff and said, Marilyn, you ought to quit writing your column. You're propagating.

This is why math is in such trouble in America. It really became quite a faux pas. But it turns out that she's right.

Given the odds and the conditions that are expressed in that problem, you should always switch to door number two. You have a two-thirds chance of being right with door number two. And she said, if you don't believe me, she had to write subsequent columns because she got such volumes of mail on this.

Everybody thought she was wrong. She said, set it up. Try it out.

And so people did it with classes, elementary school classes would actually set this up and people that always switched got the prize 66% of the time. People that always stuck with their original answer only got the prize one-third of the time. And it works itself out in experience.

Well, there was another guy at Cornell or someplace that thought this was not only a great example of mathematical probabilities and how counterintuitive those can be, but that it was also an interesting exercise in psychology. And so he went and did a whole bunch more trials and tests with students there at the university. And people's tendency, even after they are told that the odds are better if they switch, people tend to stick with their first choice.

And he was interested in the psychology of this. And people would even state, well, I figure that there is a 50-50 chance that I'm right or I'm wrong, and I would rather stick with my original choice and be wrong, find out that the prize is behind door number two, then switch and be wrong and find out that the prize was behind door number one and I had it and I lost it. There is a thing in our psychology that says, there is virtue in being consistent and sticking with my choice.

At least I have that virtue. And I never had the prize to begin with. I chose door number one, it was behind door number two, I never had it.

That would be better. I would rather have that happen than for the prize to be behind door number one, I switched to door number two and I lost it and I shouldn't have changed. Now I'm going to be regretful, I'm going to hate myself for my decision.

And so people don't tend to hate themselves so much if they stick with their original choice than if they switch. And this is a psychological thing that also affects the way we make decisions. We will doggedly cling to, and this goes to beliefs.

A lot of times once you develop a belief, we have an inherent human tendency to not switch. This happens on multiple choice tests. People say, oh, you should always go with your first instinct.

You look at a multiple choice, A, B, C, and D. Regis says this all the time on Millionaire. He says, no, your first instinct is usually the best. Well, people have analyzed multiple choice tests where someone initially chooses an answer and then they go back and correct the answer.

And most of the time, the second answer, when they go back and correct their answer, is right. More often than not, when people switch, they switch to the correct answer. It is less common for the first instinct, when you're not sure, to be right.

It's more common that changed answers are more often changed to the right answer than changed to the wrong answer. Well, what does that have to do with what we're talking about here? What is it that you desire? What is it that you're looking for? This verse 2 says, A man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor, so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires. This is what he wanted.

Everything he wants, he's gotten. He wanted riches, he's got it. He wanted wealth and status, he's got it.

He wanted honor and esteem, respect, he's got it. He has everything that he wanted, but God has not empowered him to eat from them. Instead, a foreigner enjoys it.

Well, it's one thing to never have had something. It's something else to have had it and then lose it. And so this is the worst case scenario.

Not only does this person have these things and they're not able to enjoy them, not able to consume it, to eat from it, to have capacity to enjoy it, but somebody else gets it. And to have had it and then see somebody else take it away is, in the human perspective, one of the worst things that can happen. You see this, again, in the movies a lot of times.

Well, if I can't have her, no one can. And bang, bang, bang, shoots the woman. You know, it would be worse.

I would rather not have her. That's bad enough, but I'm sure not to let somebody else have her. So I'll kill her before I let somebody take her away from me type of thing.

Well, that is the feature here where it says a foreigner enjoys these things. It is taken away. This is actually the experience of national Israel, is it not? God brings them to the promised land, gives them rest from all their enemies.

You have the kingdom of David. You have the kingdom of Solomon. And later on, because of apathy and indifference, God not only dispossesses Israel from the land, but it is given to foreigners.

Foreigners occupy Jerusalem. Foreigners work the fields. They planted the vineyards.

The foreigners eat the grapes. This is talked about over in Isaiah and Ezekiel and Jeremiah. And the woe songs that are sung over the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah over and over again.

These were things that God had designed for you, and foreigners are swooping in and taking it from you. This is part of the five cycles of discipline on a nation that are described back in the law of Moses, that you will work your fields and another will eat from them. Well, why would this be the case? Why would God give someone the desires of their heart and yet not give them the authority or the power to partake of it, to eat from it? Well, the answer is here in verse 2. His soul lacks nothing of all that he desires.

What are his desires? They're all in the earthly plane, aren't they? He desires riches. He desires wealth. He desires kabod, honor.

And he gets what he desires. This is the positive side, if you will, of what you see over in Romans chapter 1. God reveals himself when they knew him as God. They did not glorify him as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

And God gave them over to the things that they chose instead. The whole last half of Romans chapter 1 talks about men who defile themselves with animals and men with men, and they go after idols, and so God gives them over to the things that they desire. God gives people, literally, the desires of their heart.

I've thought about this. I've told you this story before, but it's been a while, so I'll tell you again. There was a seminary student in Tulsa who went through seminary and learned how to present the Word of God and to communicate the truth contained therein.

But he was from a denominational background, and he returned to his denominational roots, returned to the church from which he had come and tried to teach the Word of God there and

came back to the president of our seminary and the pastor of our church and was in tears and said, What am I doing wrong? I don't understand. I've got the tools. I'm presenting the Word of God isagogically, categorically, exegetically, and it doesn't seem to be of any interest.

People don't receive it. They don't want to hear it. They're rejecting it.

I don't understand. Well, he was measuring others by himself. He loved the Word.

He loved the truth. He had a passion and a desire to know it and to communicate it to others, but he went into an environment where people were coming to church and getting exactly what they wanted. They liked their denominational church.

They liked their traditions. They liked the environment and the type of teaching or lack thereof that they were getting, and he was going back in there with a passion and a desire and a love for the Word of God that was not shared by those people, and to present and to bang his head week after week was just an exercise in frustration. They had what they wanted, and they didn't want what he was bringing back to them, and he really had a terrible wrestling match.

He thought there was something wrong with him and that he had failed in some way and that he just wasn't doing it right because how could anybody possibly not love the Word of God and not want to learn it and grow and bear fruit? Well, it depends on what people desire. We tend to think, well, everybody is hungry and searching and dissatisfied and seeking and looking, and you know, Jake Hess sings a song, You'll never find complete peace of mind until you find the Lord. You'll never have happiness and fulfillment until you find the Lord.

Well, in this life, there are people who that's not what fulfills them. That's not what satisfies them. Other things do, and there are people who are happy in their circumstances such as they are, and they reject the Lord and reject the things of God.

There are even believers who are that way. Well, this is the situation in verse 2. This is the calamity that you see under the sun. God gives somebody these what appear to be wonderful things, these prosperous circumstances, and it's exactly what they want.

But God does not give him the power to enjoy, to partake, the capacity to appreciate, to eat of these. And what is it when you eat of something? It's one thing to have it, and it's something else to eat of it. To eat of it is when you internalize it and it becomes a part of you.

It's something that you take with you. A foreigner enjoys it instead. This is havel and a grievous affliction, a calamitous sickness is what this literally is.

It's ra'ah again, and then the word for sickness or illness or disease. Well, there is a reason. Would there be a faithful believer? Would there be a David or a Daniel or a Joseph that God would give riches and wealth and honor and not give the capacity to appreciate it, not give the power to eat of it? There's a reason why God does not give this power.

Why God does not enable this person to enjoy and have a permanent benefit from these things. Why would that be? Well, you can fill in that blank. We're going to find out as we go forward.

In fact, we'll find it out if we go backward. Do you remember the end of chapter 5? Look at verse 18 again. Solomon says, here is what I have seen to be good that is beautiful, tov that is yafeh.

Remember that? Tov, t-o-v, yafeh y-a-p-h-e-h good that is beautiful. Here is what I have seen. So, he sees one thing in verse 18 of chapter 5. He sees something else in verse 1 of chapter 6. Here is what I have seen to be good that is beautiful, to eat, to drink, and to see good in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun in the few days of his life which God has given him, for this is his, the New King James says, what? This is his heritage.

The New American Standard says this is his reward. The word here which is chelek c-h-e-l e-q chelek, here it's chelko because it has the possessive on the end, third person. This is his, this word means portion.

And this is the distribution of territory. This is often used in the Old Testament for your portion of the land, your tribal allotment. This is your allotment of the spoils or your allotment of the territory that God has assigned.

Well, this puts us in mind of what we see in Revelation chapter 20 and other places in the Bible where it talks about what is your portion. Remember the ones who perpetuate a lifestyle of evil, their portion is in the lake of fire? They are not in the lake of fire, their portion is, their allotment, their inheritance. The fruit of their life, the result and the permanent lasting effect of their life winds up being the smoke ascending from the lake of fire.

Well here, good that is beautiful is when one eats and drinks and enjoys or sees good in all his labor in which he labors under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him, this is his allotment. Some people have these things and God gives it to them as an allotment. Other people have these things and God does not give them the ability to take from it anything that is permanent, to eat from it.

Verse 19 of chapter 5, For every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, our same two words, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his heritage, his allotment, and to rejoice in his labor, this is given by God. This is the gift of God. This man will not dwell on the days of his life.

He will not often consider the days of his life because God answers him with joy in his heart. This is the contrast. We see the positive first at the end of chapter 5. We see the negative at the beginning of chapter 6. Two men can have prosperity, riches and wealth.

Two men can see good in what they are doing. One of them has the power to partake of that, to take something permanent from it, to be nourished and built up by it, and the other does not.

Others are going to enjoy those things.

What is the difference? That is what we want to watch for. How can we be on the side of good that is beautiful and not calamitous sickness? Both of these things occur under the sun. This is the result of life lived under the sun.

Well, let's look at verse 3 of chapter 6. If a man fathers a hundred, and you see children in italics there. That is because it is the word for giving birth and it doesn't have the word for children. If a man begets or fathers a hundred and lives many years so that the days of his years are many but his soul is not satisfied with goodness.

Well, we need to take a look at this word satisfied because it does have the idea of satisfaction. What is satisfaction? What does it mean to be satisfied? This is the Hebrew verb Saba S-A-B-A and it means to be satisfied to be in abundance to be sated with something, to be surfeited be full with a surplus cup full and running over. And so often times in the context in which this word is used, it has the idea your soul is satisfied.

There's lots of songs and hymns that talk about my soul is satisfied, satisfied with Jesus and that sort of thing. But the idea here is the idea of being filled, of being full and overflowing. And it is not so much the idea, do I have a sense of satisfaction? It is am I full of something? So take a look at it again.

If a man fathers a hundred and lives many years however many they may be however many there are days to his years but his soul is not filled and overflowing with good and that's what it is, it's tov in fact it's literally ha tova filled with the good and he does not even have a burial. Now what on earth? How could this rich man with prosperity and honor and everything not even have a burial? This is the word for burial or grave probably the easiest way to illustrate the thought here is to turn to Isaiah chapter 14 and verse 20 this will be the first of three passages we'll look at. Isaiah chapter 14 and verse 20 this section is talking about those who are under condemnation from God remember Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 are the two famous chapters that allude to Satan, to Lucifer the son of darkness.

Isaiah 14, 12 How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer and it says son of the morning in the New King James, this is son of darkness and this is a very interesting phrase I've told you in other contexts about the word study here but if you haven't already corrected this, that is Lucifer son of darkness, he is not son of the morning he would love to appropriate the morning star title that belongs to Jesus Christ to himself but he is not this is sort of an oxymoron because Lucifer means shining one he says, O shining one, son of darkness he was a shining one, but he has become a son of darkness How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations for you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven these are the five I wills that constitute the original sin of pride, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, these are the angels of God, I will also sit on the mount of the congregation this is the place of

judgment and authority over the assembly on the farther sides of the north I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, once again reference to the hosts, the heavenly hosts I will ascend above them, I will be like the most high, I will exercise authority, I will dispense judgment I will decide who gets what I will make policy I will set agendas and so on yet, God says, you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the pit those who see you will gaze at you and consider you, saying is this the man who made the earth tremble who shook kingdoms who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities who did not open the house of his prisoners all the kings of the nations, all of them sleep in glory, everyone in his own house but you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch like the garment of those who are slain thrust through with a sword who go down to the stones of the pit like a corpse trodden underfoot you will not be joined with them these are the kings of the earth who sleep in glory you will not be joined with them in burial because you have destroyed your land and slain your people the brood of evildoers shall never be named prepare slaughter for his children because of the iniquity of their fathers lest they rise up and possess the land this, without going into all of the details of the analogy here, the metaphor between a high and mighty king of the earth, the king of Tyre in this case and the connections to Lucifer and how one is being played against the other and is illustrating the other the idea here expressed is, there is nothing worse than not having a decent burial what does it mean to not have your burial? it means that your your heritage and your posterity is destroyed there is no memorial to you there is no remembrance of you after your death whether or not someone is literally planted beneath the ground is really beside the point this is the idea that you have no grave your life isn't remembered for anything however much you strutted and fretted your hour on the stage after you're gone there is not even a headstone there is not even a marker to indicate that you were here and it also talks about the fact that his children are destroyed it says the brood of evildoers will never be named nobody is even going to know the names of your children prepare slaughter for his children they are going to be wiped out you are going to have no marker on the ground you are going to have no tombstone in the cemetery you are going to have no children to carry your name forward what is this talking about? all of these are different human ways of expressing the fact that despite all of your efforts and all of your being lifted up and all of what you thought was glory it's going to be wiped out you are going to be like Amalek God told Israel I will wipe the memory of Amalek off the face of the earth and all the way up until the last century people thought the Amalekites were a myth well this is the idea turn over to Jeremiah chapter 8 and verse 2 just the very next book over Jeremiah chapter 8 at that time says the Lord they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah and the bones of its princes and the bones of the priests and the bones of the prophets and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem out of their graves they will spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven which they have loved and which they have served and after which they have walked which they have sought and which they have worshipped they shall not be gathered nor buried they shall be like refuse like garbage on the face of the earth then death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of those who remain of this evil family who remain in all the places where I have driven them says the Lord of hosts you go on down and find out that

this is a people that has slidden back in a perpetual backsliding they hold fast in deceit they refuse to return God says you are not even going to have an honorable grave I am going to turn your bones out on the ground and let them bleach in the light of the sun that you worshipped you can turn several pages forward in Jeremiah to chapter 22 and look at verse 18 Jeremiah 22.18 this is talking about Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah they shall not lament for him saying alas my brother or alas my sister they shall not lament for him saying alas master or alas his glory he shall be buried with the burial of a donkey dragged and cast out beyond the gates of Jerusalem this is when they would drag stuff out to the Gehenna pit to the garbage heap and this is talking about Jehoiakim no burial no memorial he is dishonored after his death well this is the idea of the man even if he fathers a hundred children and lives the days of his life are many but his soul is not filled up with the good and he does not have a burial what does this mean? there is nothing permanent that issues from his life isn't that what Ecclesiastes is all about? where is the permanent from this life under the sun this man has been filled with good things, has everything his soul desires, has fathered a hundred children but he doesn't have a burial he doesn't have anything permanent to show for this life, his soul was not filled with the good with the good of 5 19 and 20, good that is beautiful then I say Solomon goes on in verse 3 of Ecclesiastes 6 better a miscarriage than him better is the aborted never alive baby than he this word that is translated miscarriage, that is exactly what it means it is chelech in Hebrew it goes on in verse 4 to describe the miscarried child, the child that never breathed, that never came to life it comes in Hevel it says it comes in futility but it comes in a vapor you can't get any more temporary than a stillborn child it is seen briefly and dispensed with immediately you want to talk about something that is here and gone in rapid fashion something that is could be described as vanishing as a vapor it is the stillborn child it is not sudden infant death syndrome it wasn't here for 10 months they have this story about the people who had the 10 month old son that died and they hired this lady to try to clone him, they have another perfectly healthy son, but they say it is not Josh, it is not the one we had at first we want him back, so they are trying to get this lady to clone their infant son that died well, they had him for 10 months, this child is stillborn it comes in Hevel and goes in darkness, this is Choshek, a word for darkness and its name is covered in darkness it never sees the sun, its life never even started didn't have a sunrise not even under the sun and it never knows it is better off than he literally it says more rest has this one than that the stillborn child has better rest, has a better death in other words than this one, why would this be true, why would it be better to be stillborn than to be a man well, go back to our Monty Hall dilemma to have something and lose it this is what Peter talks about in the New Testament this is what the author of Hebrews talks about those who have tasted of the heavenly gift and the good word of God and the powers of the age to come if they fall impossible to renew them again to change of mind to repentance so long as they again and again crucify to themselves the son of God and put into an open shame Peter talks about had they never known the word of truth than to have known it and to be like the dog that returns to his vomit the swine returning to the mud pit well this is the thought that Solomon is expressing you have a better rest if you never saw the light of day your name is covered in darkness you were just here like a vapor here and gone, you never saw the

sun than to have been this man to whom God gave all of these advantages and you have no burial you have no good in your soul you haven't been filled up with good you have all of these advantages and you bring nothing away from it it's a greater calamity to have had potential and failed it than to have never had any potential at all that's in a nutshell what this is saying you and I have potential we as believers have been given great grace from God we've been given tremendous provision we have God's word we have God's spirit we have days measured and filling up years of our lives we have potential each and every day God has given us many wonderful things many of the desires of our own souls have been fulfilled the question is is our soul producing good that is beautiful is our soul being filled up with the good that God is looking for so that God can give to us permanent lasting benefit from this life that's the question this whole book of Ecclesiastes is about identifying and seizing and laying hold of that which is permanent and that's exactly what Solomon is talking about here the man at the end of chapter 5 God gives him the power to eat from it Solomon says this is good, it's beautiful this is the fulfillment of all of God's plan and purpose the tragedy the calamitous sickness that befalls and he says this is so common among men it's multiplied, it's numerous on man where people have all the advantages and make no good use of it they come away with no burial their bones are going to be cast on the surface of the ground to bleach under the sun that they focused on instead of God verse 6 even if this man to whom God has given these things even if he lives a thousand years twice what is a thousand years twice? 2,000 years how long is the church age in the scheme of God's 7,000 year plan? 2,000 years in a way you can see a foreshadowing of the church age who has been given most of the advantages looking over the dispensations and looking over the unfolding revelation of God's plan it's us this dispensation we have the greatest amount of grace and provision of anybody in human history we certainly have no less and our calling, our opportunity is so much greater than what Israel was given Israel is going to catch up to us in the Millennial Kingdom they are going to have the individual ministry of the Spirit they are going to have the complete connected revelation from God that we have now they didn't have the New Testament they couldn't see Christ and see the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation in concrete literal form the way we do we have been given so many advantages but Solomon says even if a man lives 2,000 years and then it says and does not see good things what does this mean? he can't see where the good is he doesn't see the Tov, he doesn't identify he doesn't correctly identify what is good what is lasting and what is permanent all go to one place do not all go to one place if you can't see the good you might as well you're right down there with the stillborn child the effect of your life in fact he's better off than you he's got a better rest because he didn't squander a potential all a man's labor is for his mouth yet the soul is not filled that's literally what verse 7 says all a man's labor is for his mouth it's to satisfy his appetite food in your mouth isn't what does you good my little brother didn't like peas he left the table and went and took a nap and woke up an hour and a half later still had the peas in his mouth food in your mouth doesn't do you any good it's what you eat what you partake of that is permanent and what lasts all a man's labor is for his mouth and yet the soul is not filled that is the tragedy and that's where we're going to have to resume next time let's close here in a word of prayer father we

thank you that you have not only shown us the challenge of this life and the opportunity of this life but you've given us the means to fulfill it we do not have to have a life that winds up with no permanent effect, no permanent value you have given us everything we need to succeed in laying hold of that for which we were laid hold of we pray that God the Holy Spirit will remind us of that each and every day so that we can redeem the time we can justify and vindicate the work of Christ on our behalf as we exercise faith and are declared righteous and become places where your glory is reflected both now and in the age to come we pray that we will fulfill the destiny and the potential that Christ died to give us we pray that we will be pleasing in your sight and we ask it in Jesus name, Amen