

02-03-17b Ecclesiastes

See, that's such a great song for our study, remembering that we're going to fly away. And as we pick up our study in Chapter 9 of Ecclesiastes, Solomon has gone to great lengths to set up this problem that not only is there a lot of intensive labor and activity going on in this life, but he is the king of the laborers. He has surpassed everyone.

He says, somebody comes after me, what can he do that I haven't already done? And I'm here to tell you that although initially I was taking my gratification from my work, when I applied my heart with wisdom and looked at this, I realized that it would all pass away. Somebody else would inherit it, and I got to thinking, why am I knocking myself out? Is it just the pleasure of the moment? Is it just I have my reward and the gratification of having accomplished something, and that's all there is? And this is the counterfeit. This is what stuffs us with wind.

What does it mean to be feeding on wind? It means that you're temporarily full, but it has no substance. It says chasing after the wind, but we did that study. Feeding on wind means you've got a temporary feeling of fullness, but it's because they pumped you up with air.

You've stuffed yourself with emptiness. And Solomon says, you can go your whole life taking this kind of pleasure, and there's nothing good in a man eating and drinking and declaring his soul good in his labor. And you remember tov, good, t-o-v, has a range of connotation from intrinsic good to prosperity.

In the day of good, we saw back at the beginning of the previous chapter, in the day of prosperity, be foretov. In the day of tov, be foretov. In the day of prosperity, enjoy the prosperity.

But declaring oneself satisfied in the labor, this does make us feel good, doesn't it? We map out what we want to get done and we get it done. We have a project. All of us have projects.

If you're a man, you have to have a project. There's no point to life if you don't have projects and get them completed. And if you lack any, you can get married and have no end of them.

And there is a sense of gratification in getting things done that need doing, building something, fixing something. I am one of the world's worst about spending my day just fixing things that are broken. A lot of times it would be cheaper and easier to just go buy a new one, but it's just the challenge.

I know it can be fixed and I think it ought to be fixed and I just fix it. Well, Solomon, this is his point because that is the counterfeit. Feeding on wind is accepting this substitute pleasure, this substitute declaration of value.

And he says you've got to use wisdom to see beyond the setting of the sun. You've got to be aware of the time and the judgment. It's the one that is good in God's sight that's going to count.

And part of the counterfeit, part of the problem, part of the substitute system of value is that in this life we look and we declare things to be good and there's no argument. Someone can be getting over and climbing on the backs of others and doing evil to his fellow man and he doesn't get a comeuppance. The penalty is not inflicted.

God doesn't come down and balance the scales under the sun. And so people say, well, that really is the way to prosper and get ahead and do good. And it's one thing to look at that in life in general and in the area of accomplishments and goals and things.

It's something else when it comes to going to the holy place and walking in and out and commending ourselves and declaring ourselves to be good. This is a tragic mistake because we are believers and we are fooling ourselves into thinking that we are godly when in fact we have a form of godliness and we have denied its power. And it's amazing to me that Solomon, a thousand years before Christ, is grappling with these larger issues.

When you look at the law, when you look at the prophets, you are dealing with Israel in the area of fundamentals. Love the Lord your God. Have no other gods before me.

Don't make graven images. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Don't be an adulterer.

Don't be a murderer. Don't steal. Don't bear false witness.

The Ten Commandments, the elemental principles of life of integrity, life before God, life in the sense of serving God. Solomon says, you know, there are people who will take this and make a false religion out of it. There are people who will go in and out.

He starts out using a secular example. It reminds me of Romans chapter 1 and Romans chapter 2. Paul says, it's easy to look out there and see the pagans messing this up. Homosexuals and murderers and taking the truth and twisting it to their own ends.

Then in Romans chapter 2 he says, you, oh man, who can so clearly see with your laser-like vision all of the problems of these other people are doing the same thing. And he talks about the judgment. He says, to those who by patient continuance and well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, God will grant eternal life.

But to all of those who disobey the truth, tribulation and anguish, wrath in the day of judgment. Solomon, a thousand and fifty odd years before Paul, is facing his Old Testament assembly with that same idea. You Israelites, isn't this the problem in Israel? I'm righteous, I'm doing good, I'm rich.

You see it all through Jesus teaching to the Pharisees and talking to the rich. So, as you get into chapter 9, he says, I have considered all this in my heart. Literally, he says, I have given all of this to my heart, even to make all of this clear.

And depending on how you slice your Hebrew consonants here, without changing their order, it's a matter of how you divide them. It either says, even to make all of this clear, and that's the infinitive of one verb, or just by changing the spacing it says, and my heart saw all of this. It's a real odd coincidence that just by moving a letter from the beginning of one word to the end of the previous word, you get a different sentence.

It really means the same thing. Solomon is pondering this in his heart. Notice, he's meditating day and night on the Word of God.

He says, remember at the end of the previous chapter, up in verse 16, when I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the answer that has worked upon the earth, the response that God has given, because in the day and in the night's sleep with his eyes, man is not seeing. This man to whom he commended pleasure, he said, there's nothing but to eat and drink and be pleased, and this accompanies him in his labor in the days of his life that God has given to him under the sun. There are people who say, my life's going okay.

I look at my soul and I declare it to be good. I'm getting pleasure out of my accomplishments. I'm getting pleasure out of my relationships.

I'm satisfied. But Solomon says, when I gave my heart to know wisdom and see the answer that's worked on the earth, because in the day and in the night's sleep with his eyes, he is not seeing. This man that is contending himself, he's not seeing it.

You have to give your heart the wisdom to see it. He says, when I did that, in verse 17, I saw all the work of God, for man is not able to find out the work that has worked under the sun. And in this regard, or on account of this, this man will labor to seek and will not find, and even if the wise one will speak so as to know, he will not be able to find.

And I think about all of these guys on public television giving out the keys to life and the secrets of the wisdom masters of the ages and all this other happy stuff. You've got Dianetics with L. Ron Hubbard, and you've got Dr. Dreyer or Dyer or whoever he is, the man that's been on all the public television telethons. He quotes Confucius out of one side of his mouth and the Bible out of the other.

These are the keys to life. Even if the wise speak so as to know, they are not actually finding because it all centers on happiness and satisfaction in this life with no regard for the next. So Solomon says in chapter 9, verse 1, I put all of this into the input side of the computer.

I loaded up all of this data into my heart. Everything that I've seen, everything that I've experienced, to try to clarify it. The word, if you take the first translation, the first division of the consonants, it actually means to purify, to take something and clarify it, to distill it down into its basic elements.

Or my heart was able to see all of this when I loaded it in and I analyzed it, that the righteous ones and the wise ones and their works of service are in the hand of God. Even as love, so also is hate. Man is not knowing.

Man is not aware. What does this mean? It's kind of tricky until you follow Solomon's thread of thought. When you look at things in this life, there are some people that God loves.

There are other people that God hates. And this is in the sense of, Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated. It doesn't mean that God's got this burning animosity.

It's in the sense of, what is God going to do with the judgment? There is love in the sense of benevolence and blessing and reward. And there is hate in the sense of despising the works of this individual. I gave you the talent and you buried it in the ground.

I'm going to take it away from you and give it to someone who can do something with it. I gave you this vineyard to oversee and all you did was gratify yourself. I'm going to take away your vineyard and I'm going to give it to someone who will bear the fruits of it.

He says to Israel, I tried to give you the kingdom, you would have none of it. I'm going to take the kingdom from you and I'm going to give it to a nation bearing the fruits of it. That's hate.

That's the covenant sense of hate and the sense of, I am not going to benefit you because you did not keep your end of the covenant. But when you look around, he says the penalty for evil, that's part of the covenant, right? If you're disobedient, all of this indignation and wrath is going to fall on your head. He says it's not speedily executed.

People are not rebuked because every time they, I think about this, I think about the speeders. I can't tell you how many times I have fantasized that for people who drive single in the high occupancy vehicle lane or people who cut in and out of traffic, people who think that their needs and their schedule and their transportation desires are more important than all the rest of us, we are just pylons in their way to be weaved around, to be cut in front of, to cut in front of me and then do a short stop. And if I hit his bumper, I'm going to be the guy paying out of my insurance.

I think about those people and I've often fantasized. And depending on how spiritual I'm feeling that particular day, it ranges from just paint balls to mark their car with international distress orange so that others can see them and know that they're a bad driver to actual .50 caliber type weapons that would actually disable their vehicle. But we want something bad to happen to people that do bad.

I was going to a client. This is many years ago. I was going to a client down here downtown.

It wasn't downtown. It was up at Tollway and Spring Valley. And I was pulling out of the parking lot.

I'd finished doing my computer work. I was coming out. I was at a stoplight and I glanced in my rear view mirror and there was a guy in a high dollar car behind me, a Lexus, and he had this white powder all over the back of his hand and he was sniffing this stuff and it was on his face and it was on his hand and we were in traffic and I thought, where's my cell phone? This guy is committing a crime right here in traffic.

He's getting hired in a kite on cocaine powder. I'm a witness. Something needs to be done.

This guy needs to be put away. But I didn't have a cell phone and the needs of traffic and so forth, there wasn't anything I could do and I thought, that guy is a criminal and he's supporting a drug dealer and that money's going off to support who knows what and that is a criminal action and that guy is living the life of Riley here in this high dollar office complex. He's probably an executive coming down, couldn't wait to get home.

He needs, there needs to be recompense. There needs to be justice done here and I was helpless to do anything about it. I thought about putting my car in reverse, let him be the guy that hit my rear bumper and make the police come and see how he explained his way out of that.

But I only had one car that was working at the time. I couldn't really do that either. But the point is, we want things to balance.

We are wrong and we want it righted. We are low and we want to be elevated. We are righteous and we want to be blessed now.

We don't want to think, well, it's way down the road. Solomon says, I look around in the earth and I saw the work of God that man doesn't find it out. People can labor and seek and they don't get the key because they don't have the magic glasses.

Remember the angel Moroni in the Book of Mormon and all that? You couldn't read it unless you had the magic golden glasses, which is totally absurd and erroneous. I don't even know why I used that as an illustration. But for us to be able to see into the eternal future, it takes the ministry of God's Spirit.

It takes the power of God's Word. For us to be convicted and be convinced that there is a life coming after death, there is a judgment and a time beyond the setting of the sun, man in his investigations with all of his human wisdom is never going to be able to see it, never going to be able to find it. Man will labor to seek and will not find in 817.

Even if the wise speak like they know, they're still not going to be able to find. Solomon says, I put this all into the computer of my heart. The righteous and the wise one and their works of service are in the hand of God.

You've got to commit it into the hands of a faithful Creator. God is not unrighteous to forget your work and service. The author of Hebrews tells him.

Paul says, Your works of faith and your labor of love, God knows. God keeps track. It's in the heavenly books.

But don't expect to see vindication in this life because it's just not there. You look around and the people that God loves and the people that God ought to be disciplining and punishing, lightning just doesn't strike. Another of my fantasies, these people go whizzing by me, out of control, speeding in the wrong lane with only one guy in the car and they're just gone.

And everybody else sees it and takes heed and people do what they're supposed to in traffic. It just doesn't happen. As God's love, so is God's hate.

Man is not aware of what's hanging in the balance. Man does not see the wrath that he is treasuring up. Think about the spiritual side that Solomon has introduced in this chapter.

People in the modern Christian church do not see the wrath of Romans chapter 2 that they are treasuring up in the day of judgment because lightning doesn't strike churches. People don't drop dead when they blaspheme and twist and distort the Scriptures. The worst... I mean, I think about Ananias and Sapphira.

They fibbed about how much money they sold their land for and they dropped dead on the spot. And I think there are just astronomically greater blasphemies that are uttered in the name of God and in the name of Christ and communicated to thousands of people and the perpetrator just walks away. Man does not see the love of God and the hate of God when he looks around.

Otherwise, faithful believers would just be winning the lottery and having mansions and all kinds of prosperity and there would be this equality. There would be action and reaction. Man doesn't see it.

And really, it's a bad place to split the verse here in verse 1 and 2 because the last phrase in verse 1 says, All before their faces... There's a period and in the printout I gave you, you'll see this. Even as God's love, so also is God's hate. And I've supplied the word God because that's what's in the context here.

They're in the hand of God. Man doesn't see when he looks around. He's not aware of those that God loves.

People looked at John the Baptist and saw he had a criminal record and got executed and they said, well, that's what you get for speaking against the government. I could have told you that. You lame brain.

What were you doing? Bad-mouthing Herod and his wife. No wonder. You dummy.

Don't you know how life works? People didn't know that he was beloved by God, that of those

born of women there was none greater than John in the Old Testament age. They're not aware. They don't see it.

All before their faces, and this actually belongs to the verse 2, all before their faces, what do they see? Anything can happen to anybody. It's all according to all. Anything you want to name, bad things happen to good people, good things happen to good people.

Bad things happen to bad people, good things happen to bad people. Everything happens to everybody. There's no correspondence between the values that you establish in your soul and the goals that you pursue and the outcome in your life.

When it comes to attitude toward God, it just doesn't prosper you. It doesn't make any difference. Everything corresponds to everyone.

Now, there are some, this word, everything, is ha-kol, which is H-K-L in Hebrew. Before the master eats, put the vowel points in, you just have the three consonants, H-K-L. Well, K in Hebrew looks like a backwards C. Okay? The letter B in Hebrew looks like a backwards C with a little platform underneath it, kind of like a fat number two.

Backwards C with a straight horizontal line at the bottom. The difference between the two is called a tittle. That little stick-out straight line at the bottom of the backwards C, like the tail of a two, is a tittle.

The difference between ha-kol and he-tho is a tittle. Some people think, because there are some other textual problems in this area, that there was a wrinkled page in this manuscript, and that what this really says is vapor corresponding to all, that everybody, it's all temporary. The text doesn't say that, but I included that in brackets because there is a text family and there are people who think that this has the word he-tho, because it's hard to translate out all before their faces is all according as to all.

You have all three times in a row, and they think one of these is probably not all. It's he-tho. Any way you slice that, it's clear from his next sentence.

A single fate or the same outcome happens to the righteous and to the evil. The word translated fate or outcome is a noun form from the verb that means to befall, what befalls someone. And fate has the idea that there is some sort of destiny out there.

This just means what happens. It literally means what befalls you. A single befalling happens to the righteous and to the evil, to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean, to the one sacrificing and to the one who is not sacrificing.

It doesn't make any material difference in your life. You see people who are religious, quote unquote, and their child develops a terrible disease and they are down at the hospital and their bills run up and they have all kinds of calamities and crisis. You see people who have no, it just

seems like everything in the world happens to them and they claim to be Christians.

And then you've got these people who make rock stars in that lifestyle and it doesn't seem like anything bad happens to some of them. A single fate, the same outcome, it doesn't matter if you are good or bad. Sacrifice, don't sacrifice.

For the good, for the one sinning, for the one pledging himself according as the one fearing to pledge, someone who swears an oath, someone who dedicates himself by means of an oath. And this again has the religious connotation. The one swearing an oath or pledging himself, pledging his allegiance.

Verse 3 in chapter 9, this is the evil, this is the calamity. It doesn't mean moral evil, it means this is the bad thing about what has worked under the sun because the same outcome happens to all. Solomon says, you know, he's sort of saying this.

If I was God, I would make sure that the evil got their comeuppance and that everybody could see it because this would be a warning and a rebuke. But he says the bad thing about what happens under the sun is that you don't get your just desserts. The same outcome happens to all and the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and derangements.

This is halal again, halal, which means to praise, to glorify with the tongue, to verbally praise. You put it in the pea ale and make it intensive and it means to rant, to babble, to become verbally incoherent. It's pushing your awe and reverence and your verbal praise to such an extreme that you just start babbling.

The hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and derangements are in their heart. They listen to this babbling and treat it like fact. This becomes their mantra.

This becomes their, it doesn't make any sense to the calm mind, but to them in their heightened state of excitement, oh yeah. I mean, you know, they get rich quick. The people that get whipped up into a froth and a frenzy on TV, stadiums full of people who just start waving their hands and losing their reason and listening to someone shouting over and over, God wants you to be prosperous.

God wants you to be well. God wants you to triumph over evil. God wants you to grind Satan into the dust and so on.

People grab a hold of that and it wasn't any different 3,000 years ago. Solomon says, this is a bad thing that happens under the sun. Nobody gets their comeuppance for that.

The hearts of the sons of men are full of evil. Derangements are in their hearts during their lives and after this, onto death. They go all the way to death into their dying moments still thinking this way.

Then verse 4, and if you read this out of the New King James, it says, but for him who is joined to all the living, there is hope for a living dog is better than a dead lion. Well, in the text as it stands in Hebrew, this is not the word for joined and it is not the word for hope. The text as it stands, and this is what they call a Kethiv Kerei.

There are many places in the Hebrew Scripture where the scribes decided that the word that stands in the text was not right, but they did not dare to change it. So they would put a note in the margin and Kethiv is what is written. Ketuvim, the writings, the Law of the Prophets and the writings, Torah and the Ve'im and Ketuvim.

Well, Kethiv, this is what is written. So what is written is in the text. What is read is out in the margin.

That's the Kerei, Q-E-R-E. So for example, when you come across the name of God, Yahweh, His personal name, it's written Y-H-W-H or Y-H-V-H, but it has the vowel points of the word Adonai. You see in the text Yahweh, but you read Adonai.

And if you ever hear somebody read Hebrew, they will never say Yahweh, they will always say Adonai. Every time they come to that. Well, there is a Kethiv Kerei here because the word here means to choose.

It's Bahar, B-H-C-H-A-R. And if you translate this just the way it stands, who is chosen unto all the living, there is confidence. And this is why they change it.

They say, gracious sakes, this doesn't make any sense. For who that is chosen unto all the living, there is confidence. And the second word that's translated hope is from Batak.

And Batak means to trust or to have confidence in. This word was used by the Rabshaka when he came to Hezekiah and the walls of Jerusalem. And he said, what is this confidence that you have? What is this that you're trusting in that makes you defy me and not cave in and surrender? What are you trusting? What do you think is going to save you? Well, you can say that was a hope, but it's more the idea of confidence.

You've got something. You've got an ace in the hole here. What is it? And so if you reverse the consonants here, you come up with being joined.

But that's also a really rare word. About the only place in the Old Testament it's used is when it talks about the shoulder boards on the vestment of the high priest. And it says his shoulder boards are joined to the ephod.

It's a really bizarre... Either way you slice it, it's an unusual word. This has been a crux going all the way back to the days of the Septuagint and the Syriac and the oldest things. I do not claim to have solved it.

But we know what it means in the second phrase. Literally, it doesn't say a living dog is better than a dead lion. It says for to the living dog it is better than to a dead lion.

There's a circumstance that it's better for a living dog than it is for a dead lion. Dog, of course, low, unclean animal, dead lion. You have the lion as a noble animal, the lion of the tribe of Judah.

Ariel, by the way, you know that angel's name, Ariel. Ari, that first part of the word is from the word for lion. And Ariel is the lion of God.

That's what Ariel means. So a living dog, it is better, he has an advantage over a dead lion. Well, the first thing we think is, well, life at any cost.

Better to compromise, be a traitor, do whatever, as long as you stay alive. Living dog's better than a dead lion. Be brave and be dead, what's the point? But Solomon here has begun a sort of communication on two channels at once.

Because he's going to talk about life and death in the literal sense of being alive and being dead, and also in the biblical sense of fruitfulness versus unfruitfulness. Are you a dead branch in the sense that you don't produce any fruit? You're not laying up anything in the permanent sense, in the Yitron or prophet sense. You're alive now, but when you're dead there's nothing.

Or are you alive in the sense that you are treasuring up things that are going to stand when God does His evaluation? So just read this a little bit and see how this works. For whether someone is joined or chosen among all the living, there is confidence. I really think that chosen is what's here, and it's hard to interpret, but remember Romans 8, 28 and 29? All things work together for good to whom? To those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

And people have done all kinds of weird things with that theologically, but you have to realize that you are called. We're called to be patriotic Americans. Everybody is called, but not everybody lives like a patriot.

Not everybody asks what they can do for their country. A lot of people say, hey, what can the country do for me? Mail me a check. Well, here, if you are chosen among the living, if you know that you're chosen, you are the chosen people of God, you are a genuine Israelite in the sense that you recognize that covenant promise that he talked about in the last chapter.

You know the way the promise works, and you're not fazed. You're not dismayed by the fact that things don't seem to balance out in time. I think that's what he's getting at here.

The one that is chosen among the living has a confidence. He has a confidence that flies in the face of what is seen. He looks around and sees, well, the scales are not balancing.

One thing happens to all, but I don't care. I know about the time. I know about the judgment.

I'm living in the light of wisdom. I am living like a chosen one. I know what I've been chosen for.

I know that there is a Yitron that can be held in the hand. And a living dog is better than a dead lion. Who is the dead lion? Here's the person that had great attainments, could take great pride in a lot of things in this life, like Solomon with his gardens and his buildings, but when he died, there's nothing left.

You may look like a dog. You may be the poor. You may be the unwashed.

You may be John the Baptist with a criminal record and his head cut off or about to be cut off in this life. People look and say, your righteousness, your faith in God isn't doing you any good, but there is a confidence. You know something that people don't know and can't find out by thinking about it, can't find out by looking around.

It's only revealed by God through His wisdom. It is better to be a living dog than a dead lion. It's better to be alive in this life, not only in the sense that you're alive, but you're poor and maybe you're despised and maybe you're looked down upon.

We're going to see this later on with the poor man who saves the city by his wisdom and then he's quickly forgotten. It is better to be a living dog with that confidence than to be a dead lion. You did a lot, but now you're gone and you didn't take anything with you when you left.

For the living are aware that they will die. Who is this living? The living dog. What is the characteristic of this living dog? He knows that he's going to die and he thinks about it and he says, you know, I want to carry something with me when I leave.

So he's aware that he will die. But the dying or the dead, this is a participle, but it's often translated the dead, and this is a double entendre. It's the dead lion.

He's got all of his attainments, but he doesn't know anything. And once he dies, there is no longer to them a wage or a reward. Even their memory is forgotten.

Is this hanging together at all? Solomon has set this up in the whole previous chapter and a half talking about what do you do with your opportunities. Do you measure? Do you please yourself or do you live to please God? You've got to have a confidence in that time and judgment that's revealed by wisdom. You can't be dismayed when you look around in this life and say, you know, this is just not fair.

I'm doing what I'm supposed to do and I'm not getting over it. That guy is doing everything that the Bible forbids and he's getting over. It is better to be the living dog that doesn't seem to be getting anywhere just over there licking Lazarus' sores than a dead lion because that dead doesn't know anything and everything that he did in this life, everything that made him a lion is forgotten.

Verse 6, Also their love and their hatred and their ardor, all of their passion and all of their drive has perished and there is no longer a permanent possession for them unto the ages. A permanent possession that lasts past the setting of the sun. There's no permanent possession left for them in all of this that they worked under the sun.

All of that that made them a lion but then they died, there's nothing unto the ages. No permanent possession. That's what that word means.

It's the same word that was heritage back in chapter 2. So Solomon says, okay, if you can't figure this out, go eat with pleasure your bread and drink with a good heart your wine for God has already favored your works. What did he say back in chapter 2? The pleasure that you get from doing these things, it's from the hand of God and if you're not looking ahead with confidence, that's all you get. God has allowed you pleasure in your work.

God has allowed you. He's going to talk about enjoying the wife of your youth here in a little bit. He's going to say, you know, God has given you some pleasure in this life but don't think that that is profit that's going to go beyond the setting of the sun.

Don't be fooled. Don't accept a counterfeit. Don't think that because I feel satisfied, because I am well esteemed and I esteem myself and others esteem me, don't be fooled.

Don't accept that. You've got to have the confidence about the judgment beyond the setting of the sun. It's a hard thing to get across and Solomon is just pressing his face against the glass of the limits of the Old Testament age.

These things are so much more fully revealed in the age of Christ, in the age of the church and we are without excuse. We have so much benefit from the hindsight. Here's Solomon, wisest man in the Old Testament age, trying to get a grasp on this.

You see him struggle. We've struggled just trying to understand what he was saying. But this is what he is saying.

He did everything in this life for satisfaction and pleasure and wound up coming up short and he realized through the wisdom that God gave him that it isn't the satisfaction you gain in this life from your eating and drinking and your work. It's what pleases God. It's those who live in the fear of the Lord, who fear before His face that are going to have that permanent possession that lasts unto the ages.

We have to try to remind ourselves and let God, the Holy Spirit, remind us of that each and every day so that we can redeem the time. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, we thank You for the privilege of studying Your Word together.

We pray that Your Holy Spirit as He works within us will find willing and ready hearts that the soil of our souls will be cultivatable so that the seed of Your Word can be planted and will bear fruit.

We pray that we will hear and heed these things and as a result we will reflect the glory of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray it all in His name, Amen.