

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26

Refrain # 1: Enjoy God's gift of life (cf. 5:18-20; 8:15)
Embrace God's plan of man's inability—1:1-2:26 (part 6)

- 1) The ability to enjoy life from God—2:24-25 (cf. 1st Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19)
 - a) Man's inability to see good—2:24a ²⁴ *There is nothing* (inherently) *good in a man* (to enable him) *to...*
 - i) Inability to enjoy God's provision of food
(1) *eat, and drink,*
 - ii) Inability to enjoy God's provision of responsibilities
(1) *and cause his soul to see good in his toil.*
 - b) God's sovereignty and benevolence—2:24b-25 *This also, I have seen, that this* (ability to experience good) *is from the hand of God,*
 - i) No one can truly appreciate the basics of life apart from being a right relationship with the living God: ²⁵ *for who can eat and who can experience joy apart from Him* (lit. "Me")?
 - ii) "All the things that we call the 'goods' of life—health, riches, possessions, position, sensual pleasures, honors, and prestige—slip through one's hands unless they are received as a gift from God. Unless God gives persons the ability to enjoy them and obtain satisfaction from them, they simply cannot in and of themselves compensate for the joy that comes from fearing God and knowing Him." (Kaiser)
- 2) Three-fold gifts—2:26
 - a) God's gifts to those who are righteous according to His standard—²⁶ *For to the man who pleases* (lit. "is good before") *Him, God has **given** ...* (3 things)
 - i) *Wisdom*—skill of living
 - ii) *and knowledge*—knowledge gained by the senses
 - iii) *and joy*,—the feeling and expression of joy, gladness, and pleasure
 - b) God frustrates the sinner—*but to the sinner He has **given** the task of gathering and collecting, only to **give** it to the man who pleases* (lit. "is good before") *God.*
 - i) *This* (task of the sinner) *also is illusory and striving after wind.*
 - ii) Cf. Proverbs 13:22; 28:8

Discussion: (Barrick)

- How can you balance work and recreation to the glory of God?
- What does Scripture say about a person's work/employment?
- What distinguishes the death of the wise and the death of the foolish?
- What characterizes a godly attitude toward possessions?